# The New REPUBLIC

*Published Weekly*

Wednesday August 27, 1930


## Two Sonnets in Memory

*Sacco and Vanzetti - August 23, 1927*

by EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

## Communism in America

*The first of a series of four articles*

by J. B. S. HARDMAN

## A Ten Year State Program

*What Roosevelt Could Do in New York*

AN EDITORIAL


FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

FIVE DOLLARS A YEAR

VOL. LXIV. NO. 821

# JUSTICE BARRED FOR 14 YEARS

*Support Mooney and Billings in Their Finish-Fight Against the Brutalities of Perjury and Prejudice*

Every thinking citizen, the world over, looks questioningly on the denial of pardons to Mooney and Billings by the State of California—in the face of a universal belief in their innocence.

It is glaringly revealed by admissions of the original prosecutors, over the recent three weeks of rehearing their cases before the Supreme Court, that Mooney and Billings were sentenced to prison for their principles and affiliations. The last vestige of perjured evidence, that fastened on them a part in the Preparedness Day crime, has been shamed out of consideration.

The urgencies presented by this equivalent of a new trial, must be met with prompt financial assistance from the friends of justice—that the case shall not risk delay or defeat.

*Send all funds to*

**Tom Mooney Molders' Defense Committee**

Box 1475 M San Francisco, Cal.

Frank P. Walsh, of New York City, emulating the generosity of his predecessor, the late Bourke Cochran, proffers his legal services without cost to the Mooney case, at this hearing, as he has for several years past.

Edwin McKenzie, of San Fransicso, as counsel for Billings has been working day and night, entirely without fees.


BOOKS

*ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES*

presents the case for American liberty! Here, in cold facts, you may see for yourself the examples of interference with free speech, intolerance to foreigners, police lawlessness, shackled education, an ever-increasing flood of prohibitions, intimidations and censorships. A ruthless exposure of the way American liberties are being lopped off one by one.

**THIS LAND OF LIBERTY**

$3.00 HARPER

**Harry Elmer Barnes says:**

"If there was ever a book which intellectual liberals should conspire to give the widest possible circulation it is this one. If there was ever a book which Fundamentalists and traditionalists should endeavor to suppress this is the volume."

**MAN and his Universe** *by John Langdon-Davies*

Illustrated $5.00 HARPER & BROTHERS, New York

To Lovers of Good Literature

***$1.50 for all***

**H. G. WELLS'S "FIRST AND LAST THINGS:** A Confession of Faith and Rule of Life." 160 pp., bound.

**CHARLES DARWIN'S "ORIGIN OF SPECIES."** Final, unabridged edition: 434 pp., bound.

**H. BRADLAUGH BONNER'S "CHRISTIAN HELL."** 160 pages: 28 illus.

**HON. BERTRAND RUSSELL'S "HAS RELIGION MADE USEFUL CONTRIBUTIONS TO CIVILIZATION?"**

**THE RATIONALIST ANNUAL** for 1931 (October next).

**THE LITERARY GUIDE AND RATIONALIST REVIEW** (Monthly: 6 issues).

**ALL** the above (the books by return, the periodicals as issued) will be sent in return for $1.50 (M.O.) subscribed **NOW** to

**THE RATIONALIST PRESS ASSOCIATION LTD.**

4, 5 and 6 Johnson's Court, Fleet Street, London, E. C. 4 (England)

THEATRE

THEATRE GUILD PRESENTS

**THE NEW GARRICK GAIETIES**

GUILD THEA., 52nd Street, West of Broadway. Eves., 8:30. Matinees, Thurs. and Sat., 2:30

# The New REPUBLIC

*A Journal of Opinion*

VOL. LXIV NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27, 1930 NUMBER 821


## Contents


The Week ..... 28

Editorials

A Ten Year Program for a State ..... 30
Summer Conferees ..... 31
Justice or Class Justice? ..... 32

General Articles

Two Sonnets in Memory (verse) ..... Edna St. Vincent Millay 34
Communism in America ..... J. B. S. Hardman 34
Dream of Death (verse) ..... Kirke Mechem 37
Old Wine in New Bottles ..... John Hodgdon Bradley, Jr. 38
Washington Notes ..... T. R. B. 41
Mother and Son (verse) ..... Allen Tate 42
Victor Branford ..... Lewis Mumford 43
Two Communications ..... 44

Correspondence ..... 49

Reviews of Books

A Strange Story ..... Robert Morss Lovett 51
Intellectual Comedy ..... Horace Gregory 52
American Wages ..... Leo Wolman 53
An English Baudelaire ..... R. P. Blackmur 54


## The Week

THOUGH reliable news about India penetrates with difficulty through the heavy screen of censorship, two dispatches have extraordinary interest. One is the rumor, by way of London, that Gandhi, after his consultation with Nationalist leaders and Moderate Indian mediators, has sent a message to the Viceroy that he will end the civil-disobedience movement on two conditions: first, that the British Government adopt dominion status for India as its policy at the round-table conference in London; second, that immediate amnesty be granted to all political prisoners. This rumor may prove unfounded, but it is credible because Gandhi has in the past favored dominion status, and even in leading the Nationalist passive resistance he declared only for the substance of independence. The second piece of news is one which would indicate that the Government has solid reason for accepting a compromise of this sort. A cablegram from Webb Miller, European news manager of the United Press, states that the boycott has cost Britain dearly, British trade with India having fallen at least 40 percent since the beginning of the movement. Anything like this decline would be a severe blow to Lancashire cotton and many other industries. It would not only aggravate the domestic problem of a government which is struggling against abnormal unemployment, but would prove in an unanswerable fashion that the Indian struggle for freedom is not merely the affair of a few fanatical leaders, but is the uprising of a people.

THE fact that the civil war has been resumed in central and north China lends weight to the belief that the Communist threat has been exaggerated or overestimated. Otherwise Chiang Kai-shek would not take the risk of exposing his flank to the so-called Red armies. As it is, the Nanking armies have struck, and while official claims cannot be taken at face value, it seems clear that marked successes have been obtained in Shantung province against the Northern allies. It also seems clear that despite the foreign correspondents' enjoyably mournful prophecies of Nanking's collapse before the Northern rebels, the latter have lost their chance of effectually crushing Nanking: that is, of wiping out the Nationalist government. Probably the most they can hope for now is to hold their own and establish a rival government in the North. What is at stake, therefore, is whether Nanking can reëstablish positive mastery over the whole country or whether a stalemate will ensue, with two or three rival camps left intact, exercising a de facto government in their own territories. In that event, China will return to the state of unofficial sectional autonomy which prevailed in the years preceding the Nationalist revolution. The present outlook is in favor of a stalemate. From the point of view of an early rehabilitation of the country, this outcome would be unfortunate, but it may be the most that can be expected in view of the complete collapse of the structure of government, a fact for which China is not exclusively to blame.

SENATOR Norris won a substantial victory in the Nebraska primary. There was never any doubt that he would, once the Broken Bow grocery

clerk of the same name as himself was ruled out of the contest. The interesting question now is whether he can win over his Democratic opponent, former Senator Gilbert M. Hitchcock, in the November election. If he had the full support of the Republicans in his state, the issue would never be in doubt; but this support he will not have. Mr. Norris has followed the dictates of his conscience, and has always refused to cringe before the whip of party regularity. In 1928 he supported Governor Smith for the presidency, for reasons which seem to him (and to The New Republic) to have been good then and to be still better now. It is not surprising that he is anathema to Mr. Hoover and his friends. The President by temperament regards a political desertion as a personal affront, and the wing of the Republican party which he represents would always put regularity above conscience. There is a real danger, therefore, that the Nebraska Republican machine will secretly knife Senator Norris and vote either for some supposed "independent" candidate or for Hitchcock. If many vote for a third candidate, Hitchcock of course will win. In this crisis, every progressive man and woman in Nebraska, every citizen who believes in human rights as against property rights, has one duty. Regardless of political affiliation, he should *vote for Norris in November* and keep this statesman in the Senate, where his usefulness is so great.

AFTER a winter of severe unemployment, the great city of New York opened one public employment exchange. Applicants for jobs began to form in line at 3 P. M. on the opening day; after a few days, when 6,000 applicants had been registered and about 250 jobs had been found, the office had to close temporarily to avoid being drowned in its own clerical work. There is no more important attack at regulation of employment than the provision of public labor agencies, but there are few more difficult tasks than to administer them efficiently. To set up one general agency for a great city with hundreds of industries is a hopelessly amateurish way to begin. It can provide some spasmodic relief, but it cannot furnish the expert service, either to the employers or to the applicants, which is essential. Any government undertaking this enterprise should start by hiring the most competent and experienced expert it can find, and should then proceed to build up a system of exchanges which, coördinated with each other, would fit into the industrial structure of the region.

ANOTHER strike against a wage reduction, in the cotton textile mills in Bessemer City, North Carolina, indicates that the fight between the employers and the workers who are attempting to better their condition is still on in full force. A surprisingly frank declaration of the Southern employers' policy was made a few days ago by John E. Edgerton, president of the National Association of Manufacturers and a prominent Tennessee woolen manufacturer, who, in an address at the Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Virginia, declared that "any policy for the South which did not have written in the boldest letters across the very top of it 'The Open Shop—the Unabridged and Unrestricted Freedom of Contract and Complete Individual Liberty within the Law'—would be a policy which could be expected neither to endure nor to bring us industrial success while it lasted." Ignoring the fact that the open-shop policy in practice is invariably a policy of barring unions from an industry, Mr. Edgerton played variations on an old tune of the Southern manufacturer who counts on a cheap labor market for increased profits: "No greater insult could be offered to the spirit of the South and the genius of its proud history than to suggest that our people will either require or tolerate intrusions of service from Moscow which are intended to destroy the generally peaceful relations between employer and employee in this section." However, Mr. Edgerton's ringing declaration that the right of workers to organize under local leadership has "never been challenged by any employers' or other organization, nor interfered with by anybody" was immediately caught up by a representative of organized labor, who recalled that the Elizabethton strike was precipitated by the courage and initiative of a seventeen-year-old girl employee who had lived in Tennessee all her life, that the American Federation of Labor did not appear on the scene until the workers had formed their own union, and that the employers in this instance literally ran the girl leader out of town and took immediate steps to crush the union of their employees. The Southern employers are still fighting the unions, and Elizabethton may again be in the headlines.

A BLOW at the administration program for farm relief has been delivered by Dr. Henry C. Taylor, former chief of the United States Bureau of Agricultural Economics, a farm economist with a world-wide reputation. All the farmer needs, Dr. Taylor declared, is that economic justice be done by "restoring competitive prices in the so-called competitive industries by making the Sherman Anti-Trust Law again effective, by revivifying the Federal Trade Commission, and by suspending that part of the work of the Department of Commerce which promotes the organization of manufacturing and trade groups for the more effective limitation of competition." Further points of his economic program for farm relief are: making public-utility commissions effective in establishing fair rates and fair prices, reducing special-privilege legislation such as the tariff, and removing the obstacles hampering collection and dissemination of information available alike to all producers, buyers, sellers and investors as a basis of free and intelligent competition in the production and distribution of economic goods. His program is based on the contention that farmers are suffering primarily

from the high prices of things they have to buy, rather than from low prices for the products they sell. We disagree with Dr. Taylor that competition can be, or in all cases ought to be, restored, but certainly in the absence of competition something ought to be done to insure fair industrial prices. And the administration has been moving in precisely the opposite direction.

## A Ten Year Program for a State

MANY eyes are now on Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt of New York. It is believed that he is the heir apparent of Al Smith for the Democratic presidential nomination—and, on the whole, a prince more pleasing to the wide stretches of non-metropolitan sentiment than was his East Side predecessor. He is about to wage a campaign for reëlection as Governor, in a year which is favorable for Democratic candidates—so favorable, indeed, that he may perhaps carry through a legislature to support his policies. What he accomplishes in the state during the next two years will be an advertisement, whether he wants it so or not, of what might be expected of him in Washington.

In addition, Mr. Roosevelt now fills a dramatic moment because of the grave revelations and still more grave suspicions concerning Tammany corruption in New York City. Will he, or will he not, take the bold course of breaking with the most powerful machine of his own party in his own state, of declaring a war without quarter against the abuses it has tolerated? We assume that if he does not do something of the sort, taking the admitted political risk involved, he will lose much of the favor with which he is regarded throughout the country, and may also jeopardize the chances of his ticket in New York state itself. But it is not the function of The New Republic to offer gratuitous advice to candidates on how to get elected. And we confess that a fight by the Governor against the corruption of city government, however necessary it may be, would not seem of great significance in the life of the nation. Corrupt municipal administrations have been overthrown before; this is a favorite activity for reformers, but it does not get us beyond the point from which believers in democratic institutions think we ought to start. Any honest and forceful and clever man, no matter what his party and what his program, may do as much. If the main purpose of electing a Governor of New York is to down a reprehensible Tammany, why not elect a Republican?

If there is a real chance of Mr. Roosevelt's election with a legislature of his own party, however, there is a chance for an experiment in state government which may, by force of example, contribute to the welfare of the whole nation. Democratic politics in the state, ever since Smith began to dominate them, have evinced a progressive tendency. But, so far, neither Smith nor Roosevelt has been able to accomplish anything which needed legislative consent except by browbeating or wheedling Republican representatives and senators. Could the Smith-Roosevelt tendency, backed by more power, be turned to good account? Could anything really significant be done?

There is a commonplace doctrine, originally Democratic, but recently voiced by spokesmen of both parties, that we are losing the virtues of local self-government. The long arm of federal bureaucracy, it is said, is embracing more and more functions which ought to be left to the states. One great trouble with this doctrine is that it has been used in a negative and infertile manner. It echoes mid-nineteenth-century "states' rights." Or it is played upon by persons who, on account of self-interest, want the federal government to *refrain* from doing something—by manufacturers who are opposed to restriction of child labor, by utilities which wish to escape effective regulation, by employers who do not want a system of governmental labor exchanges. Why does not an intelligent state executive who, like Mr. Roosevelt, adheres to this doctrine, give it life by putting it to work? The main reason the federal government is continually called upon to extend its power is because the state and other local governments fail to supply the needs of a modern people. Why not see what a state could do, if it really tried, to make such intervention unnecessary? Why not push the state's concern for the needs of its citizens to the utmost possible limit? Why not try to make New York, for example, a model of government for its own type of twentieth-century civilization? Then, if enough other states did likewise, we should know more about the advisable limits of federal action; we should know more about how the states and the federal government can coöperate. An idea like this might serve to give intellectual unity and purpose to a party in any state, over a long period of years.

A progressive government cannot make an intelligent effort to fulfill its responsibilities unless it has a program. We are accustomed to a hit-or-miss seizing of "issues," to a piecing together of miscellaneous declarations in order to make a "platform." This perpetuates the childishness of American politics. Why should not a party which has pretensions to control of a state for any purpose except the handing out of spoils know something about what it proposes to do, not merely this year, but next year, two years hence, five years hence? No industrial administration handling one-tenth of the funds or deciding one-tenth of the important questions which are a normal responsibility of a large state government is without a plan for the future. It simply cannot live from day to day. State planning ought to be as customary as industrial planning. To embody the idea of competent self-government for the state, therefore, let us have a ten-year program.

The large objective of such a program must be to provide, as far as possible, the conditions of a good life to the state's population.

Basic in such an effort must be a plan in terms of economic geography. A report of Governor Smith's Commission of Housing and Regional Planning, rendered in 1926, made an excellent beginning at the outline of such a plan for the state. It recognized as twin problems, on one side, the overcrowding and high costs of concentration in the cities, and on the other side, the abandonment of farms and the decline of agriculture, forestation and wild life.

The natural layout of the state has provided the setting for its development. The L-shaped valley system, proceeding from the mouth of the Hudson up to Albany, and thence westward to Lake Erie, has been the natural course for transportation and commerce. The wider stretches of the valleys are best suited to agriculture, while the mountainous regions behind them, less accessible and less fertile, are adapted for forest reserves, natural reservoirs for the sources of water, and recreation. The population has made different uses of this region from decade to decade, according to its economic and technical devices. First it exhausted the supply of furs, then turned to the timber. Population traced the streams up to the wilder regions. In the next period came the establishment of farms all over the state, on poor soil as well as on good, and the growth of small, scattered communities on a self-sustaining basis, each with its local industries. The building of canals, followed by railroad trunk lines which had to follow the passes, and the substitution of steam boilers, dependent on access to coal, for water-wheels, dependent on smaller streams, led to the concentration of manufacture in the valley cities, along the railroads. Commerce grew there as well. The farmer lost his independence and met competition on a wider scale; the small, self-sustaining communities declined. Abandonment of farms and influx to the cities has been proceeding for more than half a century.

What is coming next? The high costs of urban overconcentration—both economic and social costs—are pressing ever more heavily upon us. The movement to the great cities, like the movement to unsuitable farm lands a century ago, is likely to be overdone. Meanwhile new techniques have arisen which permit further changes. Individual factories no longer depend on coal which must be brought in railroad cars or barges at great expense; they use electric current, which can be transmitted cheaply for long distances, and almost anywhere. Products and persons can move freely by motor over a network of hard-surfaced roads. Industry and population can retreat again. They cannot retreat to wholly isolated small communities—commerce is still important. But much better use can be made of the valley system itself than heretofore. We can have smaller centers, more and better suburban regions, less isolated farms on the better soils. We can absorb the hilly and rocky farms into forest reserves; we can protect, develop and properly allot the supply of flowing water, whether for city water systems or for hydro-electric generation. We can restore the naturally wild areas for recreation and rest.

City planning and regional planning have already begun to make use of these possibilities. State planning is the next logical step. The state is not, of course, an autocrat which can move factories, farms and cities about like so many pawns on a chessboard. But it affects the situation in many important ways. It assists the farmer, it builds roads, it executes a reforestation policy, it controls parks, it generates electricity and regulates public utilities, it erects institutions and public buildings, it levies taxes, it lays out administrative areas. All these functions should be related to a general plan. The state can also provide the research and information on the basis of which others may coöperate.

Coördinate with a geographical plan should be a social plan. We devote less space to this because its elements have been more discussed. It would attack and compensate unemployment; it would provide effective control of utilities in the interest of the consumer and of the state's future; it would improve factory legislation; it would increase the efficiency of government; it would correlate all those activities which progressives have so long favored. It would strive to achieve, by 1940, certain tangible and measurable results.

Such plans cannot be like engineering blue prints and specifications, with all details specified in advance. They must be flexible; they must grow; they must, in our form of government, be executed by the interplay of a large number of forces. But there is no reason why the state should not be the thinker and the leader. As the Commission report puts it, "The state has no more imperative duty than to foresee, to plan and to assist in conducting such development. Up to now we have been too much at the mercy of blind chance and of our necessities. . . . We may reverse this situation: instead of being the creatures of circumstance, we may become more and more the creators of our future." Here is a way to make state politics live.

## Summer Conferees

THIS IS the season when Institutes bloom, and the voice of the conferee is heard in the land. North, east, south and west, professors, lecturers, authors and occasional, wary government officials are meeting in round tables, study groups or departmental sessions to discuss together such simple subjects as the future of civilization, or such impossibly difficult ones as the next two years in India or what to do right away about the non-voting citizens.

He would be a disagreeable individual who would rise up and demand that a law be passed

for the abolition of all conferences. It would be difficult to show that they do any material harm, while their tangible benefits are easily counted. All the more superior ones now pay their chief speakers, who are thus enabled to eat, and to send their children to better boarding schools. Even when the honorarium is no more than expenses, the harassed expert on Mesopotamia or the preferential ballot gets a few days in the country or at the seashore. His face, pale at the opening session, grows darker with sunburn as the conference advances, and often his pessimism as to the effects of industrialism in Java is conspicuously lightened after ninety holes of golf judiciously distributed through the late afternoons of seven days. The newspapers benefit by getting columns of copy every day. True, few read any of it except the headlines; but it looks well, beginning in column one of page three and meandering all the way across to the advertising which tells the miserable victims of the industrial era that white flannel trousers are for sale at Bargain Rates.

If the conference happens to be at a college, the institution gets a vast amount of publicity, or at least, many articles are printed which mention it in the first paragraph. The institution director of information (i. e., press agent) clips it all out, pastes it in a scrapbook, and on the strength of it, asks the president for a raise. Even the humble rank and file of the membership, the uncounted dozens of whom no one has ever heard, who are never quoted in the press, but without whom the institute would be a disconcerting failure, get something out of it. All next winter, in their current-events lectures to women's clubs, in Zenith and Centerville, the names of the great men whom they saw for an hour across a crowded hall will roll from the tongue, identifying dear familiar friends. "As Sir William Meston said to me . . " or "I hear from Mr. Insull that the real truth about the Sackett speech. . . ." There are scores and scores of these pallid individuals who shine ruddily for a whole year in a reflected glow to which, strictly speaking, they are not entitled, though no one could grudge it to them any more than you can grudge Charlie Chaplin his cane.

Yet there is another side to the ledger, when we come to cast up accounts on all these schools, institutes and conferences. Perhaps the most amazing fact about them is that nobody seems to have his mind changed by anything that happens there. Most of the great experts have written books on their special subjects. In those books they have taken definite stands, so that by the time they appear on the platform at the conference, they have quite a vested interest, which would be injured if they were to change their opinion. No such catastrophe ever happens. When two experts of diametrically opposed views appear on the same platform the same day, it is doubtful whether they even listen to each other, in any sense of that word which a psychologist would recognize. While each is speaking, the other is making mental notes as to the number of points he can score when his turn comes. The listeners have also decided in advance in which camp they choose to be, and the attitude of most of them is like that of the cheering section at a college football game.

All this is probably a natural reflection of our national temperament and doubtless not to be deplored. Yet it is interesting to consider what would happen if the methods of the Institute of Pacific Relations, for instance, were to be applied to some of our domestic conferences. Suppose that the experts, instead of making speeches at each other, at the audience and at the press, were to be locked up together in a room and told not to come out until they had arrived at some measure of agreement, if not on ultimate ideals, at least on what the situation is. Suppose there were no publicity until this end had been achieved. Suppose there were then issued, not a statement of their differences but of what they had discerned about the problem. Suppose it were understood that at the next annual conference a similar procedure would be followed, and that the results achieved this year would be the basis for the new efforts, instead of starting all over at the beginning, which is the present custom. Such a conference might not prove a substitute for the present type, which undoubtedly satisfies certain needs which have nothing in particular to do with "getting results." The two sorts could of course go on side by side, and might even be combined. At any rate, the attempt to have a real meeting of minds, an attempt which so far as we are aware is not now made, would be an interesting one, and we should like to see it tried.

## Justice or Class Justice?

ON THE night of August 22, 1927, Charlestown Prison was garrisoned as if to withstand a siege. Five hundred policemen, detectives and state troopers had been assembled to reinforce the usual prison guard. They were armed with machine guns, gas and tear bombs, revolvers and riot guns. The south and west walls of the death house and the cell block facing on the railroad tracks were lined at twenty-yard intervals with machine guns and searchlights in clusters of three. Across the tracks, marine patrol boats moved slowly up and down the river, each of them equipped with flares and searchlights that played against the prison walls. All the streets leading to the prison were closed and guarded; all the shops of the vicinity were shut. Patrolmen in little knots stood watching the crowds that moved nervously outside the police lines—until, just after midnight, first Sacco, then Vanzetti, walked from their cells into the execution chamber.

Of the people who wandered nervously through the streets outside the guarded area, the majority, said the account next morning in The New York

Times, "were merely curious and interested in the display of martial power." Others stumbled ahead with a sense of impotence and utter discouragement. They had struggled, some of them for years, some for weeks or days, to defend their ideal of justice, yet in spite of all their efforts, two men were being led to death after an unjust trial. They felt that liberalism in America was suffering its most crushing defeat. They felt—and some of them still feel—that justice itself was dead.

There were others, however, who believed that justice was triumphant. Some of these, in Boston and elsewhere, were willing to admit in conversation that Sacco and Vanzetti were perhaps not guilty of the particular crime for which they were being executed. But the two men, they insisted, were guilty of another crime: they were foreigners and "anarchist bastards"; they were representatives of a class which threatened the older civilization of New England; and their execution was necessary as a measure of class justice—it would "teach the damned foreign radicals a lesson."

Nor is this conception of class justice confined to one case, or to a given year, or to the single state of Massachusetts. It is, for example, the conception clearly expressed in a recent decision of the California Supreme Court. Six weeks ago, before the recent hearings in the Mooney-Billings case, but after a long consideration of the records, the court refused to recommend a pardon for Warren K. Billings, who has spent fourteen years in Folsom Prison after being convicted on even more questionable evidence than that which led to the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti. Four of the judges said in their majority opinion:

> [Billings] was the friend and associate of an organized group of persons, men and women, who were actively engaged in plotting, attempting and even executing crimes of violence against both persons and property not only during labor disputes but generally as a means of uttering their protest against both the political and industrial forms and movements of modern society. . . . It is fairly inferable from his past and present affiliations that if Warren K. Billings did not himself prepare and plant the deadly time bomb of the Preparedness Day disaster, he and his intimate associate and co-defendant Mooney knew and have always known who did prepare and plant that bomb.

And a fifth judge added in his minority opinion:

> The crime committed on July 22, 1916, was a direct assault upon organized government. . . . The petitioner has previously been convicted of a crime which shows a distinct leaning toward sabotage, and sabotage is akin to anarchy.

Thus, Mooney and Billings are also "anarchist bastards." Their conviction, says the California court, must be interpreted in this light. They are guilty—perhaps not actually guilty of the crime for which they have spent fourteen years in prison, but guilty of having dangerous associates and subversive beliefs. It is true that since this opinion was written, the court has reopened the Mooney-Billings case and has listened to evidence which makes it impossible for disinterested persons to believe that either Mooney or Billings planted a bomb in the path of the Preparedness Day parade. However, if the judges cling to their conception of justice as a weapon of defense for a privileged class, there is little assurance that they will seriously consider the evidence. They allowed a former assistant prosecutor, Edward A. Cunha, to declare before the court that he did not care what the testimony was, or whether the witnesses were reliable, or whether they agreed with one another; the radical affiliations of Mooney and Billings and their opposition to the War were enough to convict them of having abetted in the crime! It is well to admit that the judges may accept Mr. Cunha's opinion.

Here, in August, 1930, is the living successor to the Sacco-Vanzetti case, just as the Sacco-Vanzetti case was itself a successor to that of the eight anarchists unjustly convicted after the Haymarket riots in 1886. Some will wonder why The New Republic has placed so much emphasis on these cases. There are liberals who believe that they are merely special instances of injustice; that they are unlikely to be repeated within our generation. There are radicals who believe, on the other hand, that verdicts based on class justice are typical of all American courts and that no one case should be stressed at the expense of the others. We can answer this objection by saying that if justice cannot triumph over class justice in cases like that of Mooney and Billings, where all the issues have been brought to light, it has little chance of success in those obscurer cases where the evidence is more debatable. And we can answer the objecting liberals by saying that if we forget Sacco and Vanzetti—if we sit idly by while Mooney and Billings remain in prison—we have no valid defense against those who argue that justice in America is really dead, and that the form of class justice advocated by the Communists is at least preferable to class justice as rendered by Governor Fuller of Massachusetts and the California courts.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1930, IN THE U. S., BY THE NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK

*EDITORS*

BRUCE BLIVEN MALCOLM COWLEY R. M. LOVETT
GEORGE SOULE EDMUND WILSON STARK YOUNG

*CONTRIBUTING EDITORS*

JANE ADDAMS JOHN DEWEY WALDO FRANK
ALVIN JOHNSON E. C. LINDEMAN LEWIS MUMFORD
GILBERT SELDES R. G. TUGWELL LEO WOLMAN

RATES: SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN, FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS; FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR.

# *TWO SONNETS IN MEMORY*

*(Bartolomeo Vanzetti and Nicolo Sacco, Executed August 23, 1927)*

I

As men have loved their lovers in times past
And sung their wit, their virtue and their grace,
So have we loved sweet Justice to the last,
That now lies here in an unseemly place.
The child will quit the cradle and grow wise
And stare on beauty till his senses drown;
Yet shall be seen no more by mortal eyes
Such beauty as here walked and here went down.
Like birds that hear the winter crying plain
Her courtiers leave to seek the clement south;
Many have praised her, we alone remain
To break a fist against the lying mouth
Of any man who says this was not so;
Though she be dead now, as indeed we know.

II

Where can the heart be hidden in the ground
And be at peace, and be at peace forever,
Under the world, untroubled by the sound
Of mortal tears that cease from pouring never?
Well for the heart, by stern compassion harried,
If death be deeper than the churchmen say,—
Gone from this world indeed what's graveward carried,
And laid to rest indeed what's laid away.
Anguish enough while yet the indignant breather
Have blood to spurt upon the oppressor's hand!
Who would eternal be and hang in ether
A stuffless ghost above his struggling land,
Retching in vain to render up the groan
That is not there, being aching dust's alone?

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY.

# Communism in America

## *Is the Red Menace Fact or Fiction?*

TESTIFYING before the Hamilton Fish congressional committee on Communist activities, Matthew Woll stated that there were 500,000 Communists and Communist sympathizers in this country. The Communist party and its agents, Mr. Woll said, no longer constituted a danger within the trade-union movement proper. There, due to the beneficial activities of Mr. Woll and others, the hydra of sedition has been decapitated and sanity now prevails, but affairs in the other divisions of the nation's life are nothing short of alarming. Educational institutions, the army and navy, camps and schools, intellectuals and the young, are in the strangle-hold grip of the Communist party and it is the plain duty of the government to step in and to release that grip. Mr. Woll suggested the inauguration of a federal political police, akin to the gendarmerie in pre-war tsarist Russia. But he did not say how effective that method had proved to be in combating the revolutionary menace in Russia.

"Communists are being smuggled into this country from rum ships," Mr. Woll also advised the committee. No one familiar with the rum-running business will minimize the dangers from that direction. While, at the moment, Mr. Woll suggested no method of checking the importation of Communists in rum ships, he stepped forward several days later to demand a general embargo on all Russian goods, attempting, thereby, to strike American Communism at its supply source—Russia.

Mr. Woll sees red very largely because the color is an excellent publicity-getter and because his longing to see his picture on the front page is irrepressible. His economic proposals, on the other hand, are unquestionably nurtured by the high-tariff lobby with which he is intimately linked through his very own Wage Earners' Protective League. In fact, his suggestions were so stupid and politically transparent that William Green immediately felt impelled to disavow the monstrous embargo proposal as not at all a piece of labor's mind. Really, labor, in the present state of unemployment, can ill afford the loss of an important export market. But, however fanciful Mr. Woll's fears may seem, there is no doubt that deep in the public mind two convictions lie rooted: one, that the so-called "Red menace" is a very real thing, and another, that the danger can be staved off by making reprisals against Russia. "Moscow" still remains a popular American catchword.

As a means of determining to what extent the "Red menace" exists in fact, it might be well to turn to the June-July issue of The Party Organizer, published by the Communist party of the United

States for circulation among active party workers. First place in this issue is given to an "Organization Letter" from the Communist International to the central committee of the Communist party of the United States, directing the party's attention to its tasks "at the forthcoming convention." (The convention was subsequently held in New York City in the month of July.) It is difficult to observe in the letter from the Communist parent body to the American section, and in the criticisms and suggestions it contains, any trace of confidence that the movement has been making headway in recent months or years. Rather it reveals a deep concern with the need of a thoroughgoing overhauling of the movement if it is to make any headway at all. The facts in the Moscow criticism are based on a report submitted by the central committee of the American party itself, so there is no dispute as to the accuracy of the appraisal. The letter points out the following defects in the movement:

> (1) A tremendous disproportion between the ideological influence of the party and the organizational consolidation of this influence.
>
> (2) The data as to the recruiting campaign [carried out by the party from December 10 to February 28, and reported as having added 6,167 new members to the party's numbers] do not show any . . . great increase in the ability of the party to consolidate its political influence in the most important points of party work, in the factories and in the important industrial centers of the country.
>
> (3) Most of the new members who joined the party during the recruiting campaign were industrial workers who were unemployed at the time of joining.
>
> (4) Ninety percent of the new members were admitted at meetings, i. e., they spontaneously joined the party, and the factory nuclei [groups of organized Communists] did not take an active part in the recruiting campaign. . . . The factory nuclei *did not recruit a single new member.*
>
> (5) The district committees that reported the greatest success have not ordered membership cards and dues stamps equivalent to the numbers of reported new members, which makes the central committee doubt whether these claims of great recruiting successes are not bluff on their part.
>
> (6) The last party convention [in 1929] made detailed decisions on the organizational consolidation of the party. These decisions as a rule have not been carried out. Thus, there is no point of giving any new organizational directives. . . . The chief cause of the unsatisfactory work of the party . . . is the numerical weakness and the unsatisfactory composition of the leading cadres. . . . Another task is the struggle against the passivity of the party members. . . .
>
> (7) As far as can be judged . . . the work with the new members has been absolutely incompetent. This threatens that the majority will soon leave the party, after the manner of previous recruiting campaigns.

This certainly is no clean bill of health given by the Communist International to the American party. To sum up: the party is unable to organize its ranks; its central leadership is weak; its intermediate leadership is unsatisfactory; reports of successes are padded; the factory nuclei are dead; the membership is passive; decisions of party conventions are not carried out; not all the reported new members have actually joined; the new members are not employed in factories; a good many of them have already left the party, as did the new members attracted to the party during the earlier recruiting campaigns.

It seems to take mighty little to scare the Red-scare promoters themselves. To be sure, the Communist party assumes the vastness of its political influence when it stresses the "tremendous disproportion between political influence and organizational strength." But the conceded weakness of the latter undermines reasonable confidence in the former. To the extent that voting strength is expressive of the political influence of the Communist party, the demonstration has been inordinately poor. The vote cast for the party's leading candidate in the last two presidential elections was 33,076 in 1924 and 48,228 in 1928. What looked like an increase in the voting strength, if the term is applicable to a negligible total, was offset by the fact that in the 1924 election the party was on the ballot in thirteen states, and in 1928 in thirty-three states. Of course, formal parliamentary activity occupies but a subordinate place in Communist strategy, and electoral insignificance is but an element and not a basis in an estimate of Communist power. Membership is of larger significance.

Next to Mr. Woll, the Hamilton Fish committee drew liberally upon another source of information. That was Inspector John M. Lyons, referred to as the head of the federal bureau of the Police Department in New York. He estimated the number of Communists in New York as between 15,000 and 20,000. In his judgment the movement has had considerable growth since 1925, the year in which the federal Department of Justice discontinued its watchful and provocative vigilance over Communist activity. This point was elaborately used in support of the argument to delegate greater powers and larger funds to the Department of Justice. Curiously enough, the facts in the case are at striking variance with the information and judgment of this police-bureau head. The year 1925, so it appears, marks the beginning of an actual disintegration of Communist party strength.

The organized Communist movement in the United States arose out of a split of the Socialist party in 1919. The seceders who "went Communist" then claimed for their camp a membership of 58,000. Later on, Mr. James Oneal, a careful student and leader of the Socialist party, stated in his book, "American Communism," which appeared in 1927, that he thought the number was exaggerated. "A rough estimate, and a fair one," he says, "will give the whole insurgent movement

about 35,000 members at the time." In 1922, three years later, the various contending Communist factions joined with another crop of Socialist party insurgents, and their total membership in that year was 12,058. The number grew to 15,395 in 1923; to 17,377 in 1924, and to 16,325 in the first six months of 1925. In 1927 the party's paid-up membership fell to 9,642; in 1926 it was 8,698 and in January, 1930, the number of members, including those exempted from the payment of dues because of unemployment, was 6,145. The inescapable conclusion from this discrepancy between the opinion brought out before the Fish committee and the facts in the case is that cessation of Communist-prosecuting activities by the Department of Justice in 1925 had a most devastating effect on the enrollment of members into the Communist party. Likewise, the erratic Red-baiting activities in which the New York Police Commissioner engaged last winter and spring seemed to enhance the "political" prestige of the Communist party by giving it a distinctive news value. The point is not that the Communist party is Department-of-Justice or police-made, but that it is a social phenomenon which a police approach to the matter or a police mind is unfit to comprehend.

The runaway tendency of the Communist party membership, of which the Communist International speaks in the letter, is conspicuous in the history of all radical-party building in this country. The drive of 1929-30 was reported as having netted the party 6,167 new members, that is, as having practically doubled the party membership of that year; but the party convention held six months after the drive was over was confronted with mass desertion by the new recruits. In the brighter days of the party's history things were no different. In 1923 the party admitted 6,532 new members, but the total party membership increased by only 1,982. In 1924 the party took in 8,456 new members, but its actual membership decreased by 1,052. The outgo generally exceeded the income. This has been the case ever since the Communist party was organized, and was likewise a characteristic feature of the antecedent Socialist party, even when at its height in point of membership. American radicalism has not shown great ability lastingly to hold the affiliation of its converts.

There are, then, several thousand members of the Communist party, and many of them are but transients. How far does the influence of the party extend? The size of the party does not supply the answer, though the continuous decline of membership indicates the direction in which the answer lies. Membership indexes, of themselves, may not be taken as criteria of strength or weakness of a revolutionary minority movement. A Communist organization may be able to wield political influence out of proportion to its numerical strength if its membership is active and is alert to take advantage of opportunities. However, it must not be too small numerically, for otherwise it will fall below a safe and workable ratio to the size and exigencies of the periphery. Along with the party itself, its subsidiary and collateral organizations and movements appear on its balance sheet, as well as a number of what may be termed intangible assets. These are: the intrinsic force of the ideas for which the movement stands, the intellectual weakness of the opposition to the movement, its own powers of cohesion, and the centripetal tendencies of the organizations of the other side. What, in the light of these considerations, is the strength of the Communist party in this country?

The objective of the movement, to quote an authoritative party pamphlet, is "to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie." Since that object is presumed to be possible of realization only when the working class has attained to "complete political power, the Communist party has for its paramount task the winning of the majority of the working class through its vigorous participation in the everyday struggles of the working masses and through its consequent leadership of these masses." Leadership is the big word which the Communist party has inscribed on its banner and which it never tires of using. Truly, every Communist soldier carries a marshal's baton in his mental knapsack. That ever so many prospective and present marshals are expelled from their party for attempting prematurely to put the baton to use discourages but the weak, though it must be admitted that the strong are not so very numerous. The growing passivity of the membership, of which the Communist International complains, may well be a reaction to a growing sense of futility.

The structure of the Communist party has, accordingly, been conceived and designed with a view to making it an apparatus sensitive to stimuli from the economic and political environment in which the party must operate. In this respect the Communist movement differs radically from the self-sufficient and self-gravitating continental and American Socialist parties of the pre-war period. Every organized division of the party, from its central executive committee down to its basic unit, the so-called shop nucleus, is supposed to work on as many fronts as the party wishes to exert pressure and influence upon. The central executive committee is subdivided into eight departments: agitation and propaganda, organization, trade unions, research, women's work, labor sports, a farmers' or agrarian department, a Negro department, and, in addition, it runs some ten language-group departments.

The central executive committee maintains a staff of paid workers, but the shop nucleus is expected to work along the same divisions as the central-party organization. It is usually a small group of not less than three, working in one factory or a group of factories. It is often but a "street-nucleus," that is, a potential representation of factories in a certain area where there ought to be members but aren't any. The nucleus is expected

by the party to do all the miracles that the Communist International hopes the party will do. With so comprehensive a constitution and instructions skillfully worked out by the Communist International, all that the party needed to achieve success was a favorable social and political setting, a staff of capable and dependable Machiavellis, and a membership willing to go almost any length to see the party triumph.

The party has been in existence over a decade. It looked, toward the end of the first half of the decade, as if the organization stood a fair chance of establishing itself as an important branch of the labor movement, with which constituted leadership would have to reckon. In 1923 William Z. Foster claimed for the Trade Union Educational League, the trade-union instrumentality of the Communist party, an affiliated membership of 2,000,000. This, to be sure, was a gross exaggeration. At no time was Foster representative of 50 or 60 percent of the organized strength of American labor. None the less, it was true that in 1922-1923 the party periphery held title to potential opposition leadership, even if a liberal allowance had to be made for the exuberant optimism of the local T. U. E. L. secretaries both in point of numbers and actual strength. The party was the only effectively organized articulate opposition to the social and political status quo, and Foster seemed to know how to join his own trade-union reputation, gained in the big steel and meat-packers' strikes of 1919 and 1921, with the issues raised by the party.

The Communist party basked in Foster's glory. In certain cases, as, for instance, in the needle trades in New York, the minority was impressive enough to scare the regular leadership into considering a working alliance. In other cases Communists were strong enough to add, due to their leadership, "nuisance value" to the opposition groups, and so to force the conservatives to watch their step. Foster's followers were able to move a dozen state labor federations to adopt amalgamation resolutions, and in numerous local unions the labor party was receiving a respectful hearing. The fact that the radical movement was making inroads into the trade unions of the country and that the old leadership felt the challenge of the new was given formal recognition when William F. Dunne, a leading Communist, was denied a seat as delegate in the Portland Convention of the American Federation of Labor in October, 1923, and his credentials were voided because of his party affiliation. That was the heyday of American Communism.

Fate has not been too kind to the party in the second half of the decade. Its influence has been progressively declining. It now is completely isolated from the existing mass organization of American labor and seems powerful only to the immediate circle of its rather shrinking band of faithful ones. If it, as sometimes happens, hits on a living issue and seemingly meets with response, still, when the shouting is over, one discovers that the response was the nodding assent of those affected by the issue, and not a real acceptance of the solution which the Communists offer.

Today only strong faith will effectively resist an overpowering suspicion that the "masses of the working class" are not quite sure that they want the leadership of the Communist party. The Trade Union Unity League, the central organization of trade unions promoted by the Communist party into which the original minority movement has evolved, was recently waging a campaign for "50,000 new members," with the word *new* included largely for self-encouraging effect. The results have been distressingly insignificant. The political committee of the party itself was obliged to admit that "the present drive of the T. U. U. L. for 50,000 new members is not receiving sufficient support from the party." It explained the cause of this situation by " the deeply rooted opportunist conceptions and practices still prevalent in our party and the bad social composition and the preponderance of non-factory workers. . . . " This sounds pathetic, to say the least, after several years of continuous purging the party of right-wingers, leftists and centrists, and after a most rigid "bolshevization" of the party along 100-percent Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist lines had been effected. "Opportunist conceptions and practices" must have something real in their favor if they prove so ineradicable. The fate of the Communist movement in this country, largely a performance in futility, will bear examination from this angle, as well as for the valuable lessons in labor policy that it presents.

J. B. S. HARDMAN.

*This is the first of a series of four articles on Communism in America, the second of which will appear next week.*—THE EDITORS.

## Dream of Death

As Death's swift-swelling cloud,
  Night-pale, the dark sky flying,
  Dipped down, he dreamed of dying
With his sleep become his shroud.

"This is but sleep," he thought;
  "This cloud dipped not by Death's order;
  Dreams do not cross Death's border;
It was not I he sought."

Tight-eyed, he writhed in dread
  In dreams more horrid than dreaming;
  Tight-lipped, in sleep-drugged seeming
Among a dreaming dead.

And then the night-pale cloud
  Moved on, and he lay breathless;
  His dream of death now deathless
And his sleep spread for his shroud.

KIRKE MECHEM.

# Old Wine in New Bottles

JUDGING by the cries of the disconsolate, the standardization of thought and manners is a blight peculiar to the fair flower of humanity. From almost every house that cleaves to the architectural pattern of a thousand other houses, comes a diatribe against the evils of uniformity. An idea that seldom germinates in the minds of individualistic critics is that such houses, even such diatribes, are the offspring of a venerable but ever prolific tradition. The world in which we live is much the same world for all of us. Despite the varying color of our skins, we are enough alike to be herded by science into one species. The latitude for variation in the behavior of any species, whether of men, mice or angleworms, is decidedly narrow. Even narrower is the range for groups within a species. Because nature has set rigid limits on originality, a million codfish swim with identical tails, a million men live in ugly little houses and believe that when Rotarians say "Service" they mean it.

The hoariest tradition in the world is the tradition of sameness. Not only are members of the same species similar in body and behavior, but vastly different creatures at vastly separated times have met the same essential problems in essentially the same way. It does not trouble me especially to know that your body and mine are like as two peas. But it irritates me, as it must irritate you, to realize that in a million ways we also act and think alike. That our joint behavior is in many regards the behavior of creatures whom we both despise, is a fact that neither of us cares to face.

Perhaps that is why the fact has been so carefully veiled. So wishful is the thinking of men that even in the books of the scientists, facts that belie a universal urge to originality are somehow kept in the background. The specter of uniformity stalks through the past and stretches his clammy hands to the present. He is so ugly that men must close their eyes before him. Blithely and blindly poets have sung the myriad "shows and forms" of nature while naturalists have described them. The doctrine of evolution tells a story of plants and animals in endless variety and variation. Always the uniqueness of a natural phenomenon is magnified in the human mind. Looking down the vista of bygone days the student of past life sees the progressive creation of higher and higher organisms. Even though he does not always care to mention it, he also sees certain patterns to which nature has repeatedly shaped not only the bodies but also the behavior of her children.

He sees monotonous repetition rolling down the ages through innumerable cycles. He sees environment repeatedly the same, and creatures repeatedly making similar adjustments. He sees that such adjustments are not always the best arrangements for life. Degeneration is at least as prevalent as progress. Repeatedly animals have trodden the same paths to the grave. The real danger in standardization is that cuckoo notes may be swan songs in disguise.

The blood of man has flowed out of the past, and it is charged with the dross of the past. At one time the reptiles filled every imaginable habitat and lived every imaginable kind of life. Later the mammals, with their more highly organized bodies, repeated everything the reptiles had done before them, with not the vaguest hint of an original adaptation. Their blood flows in our arteries. Because behavior clings to the traditions of the past, many generations of men, despite the perfection of their brains, can lead lives of sentimentality and credulity, and can murder exactly in the manner of the dinosaurs who clawed each other into the grave over forty million years ago.

## II

The myth that nature never repeats persists in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary. It is true that never in the history of life has a defeated organism been resurrected from the dead. A Paleozoic crustacean languishes and dies when his world becomes hostile or when his vitality grows weak with the aging of his race. He and his kind disappear forever. Similarly, organs such as the digestive mechanism of a tapeworm, when once lost through degeneration, are never regained. In so far as this is true nature does not repeat. But when an amphibian, a lizard and a snake, totally unrelated in blood and totally different in body structure, take to digging burrows until through living the same lives they actually grow to resemble each other, nature has certainly repeated.

In the oceans, the oldest home of life, we see animals held in the same slavery to their environment which bound their ancestors for more than one hundred million years. Along all the shorelines of the world simple creatures cling to life today as they clung for countless yesterdays. Each day the moon has sucked the ocean from its bed and each day allowed it to nestle back again. Each day the animals living on the strand found themselves alternately immersed in water and in air. For the most part they have been children of the sea and in grave danger whenever the sea forsook them. Although a motley company, they have always met the same problems in the same way. Those who survived the vicissitudes of the dual environ-

ment learned to cling to the bottom when the tide was ebbing, to seal their shells against the drying breath of the land or to burrow into the moist sand when the tide was out. Such creatures were forced to spend half of each day without food, without any effective means of breathing, just passively enduring until the waters returned. The result has been that repeatedly through the past entirely dissimilar animals have come to develop identical organs of defense against their environment. Repeatedly they have grown and will continue to grow to an inflexible pattern, just as inevitably as house cats will continue to breed house cats and never lions.

In other portions of the ocean, in the wave-churned waters of the high seas, on the quiet bottoms of the abyssal depths, animals have been held in the mold of their environment. Everywhere throughout the past and in the present we see convergence, standardization. Animals which dwell the sunlit surface waters of the sea are usually built like wheels with hubs and spokes. Like the waters in which their destinies are immersed, they are uniformly colorless and pelucid. They can rise and sink in their medium, but they are almost unanimously poor swimmers. Such dissimilar creatures as jellyfishes, molluscs and the degenerate backboned tunicates conform to this pattern. In the deep sea where all is monotone in the environment, all is monotone in the life that inhabits it. The denizens of this underworld have poorly constructed skeletons, and they collapse when taken out of the terrific pressure of their dwelling place. Most of them are long and eel-like, with sickly hues, with large eyes to catch the meager light of the depths, with luminous organs to increase it. In these eery inhabitants of the abyss we see the effect of the most unvarying environment in the world, the most nearly perfect example of standardization in nature.

The strongest animals in the sea have always been those which evolved bodies for rapid locomotion. In the dawn seas of the early Paleozoic era, the straight-shelled cephalopods, remote ancestors of the squid, were the first racers. Shortly afterwards came the first backboned animals, and able swimmers soon grew among them. Later the marine reptiles, still later the marine birds, and finally such mammals as whales, seals and porpoises, became strong swimmers. No group of animals could be biologically more different, or geologically more removed from one another, than these, yet their bodies were molded to the same form.

A fish is a perfect adaptation to life in the water. All his ancestors lived and died in the water, and in him we see the flowing of accumulated experience. No ship can depart far from the fundamental architecture of a fish without losing speed or seaworthiness. It is not entirely remarkable that fishes should have attained to perfection. More noteworthy are certain turtles whose life was molded as much on the land as in the water. Although they breathe through lungs, they have become such good sailors that they return to shore only to lay their eggs.

More remarkable still were the fish lizards of the Mesozoic era, who came down to the sea from the land, and became so perfectly adapted to the water that they never returned to shore. Far out on the high seas they gave birth to their young alive. They assumed the body form of a shark. Other seagoing reptiles of the past, as well as the living alligators and crocodiles, were molded in lesser degree toward the form of a fish.

Such birds as the extinct *Ichthyornis*, as well as innumerable living loons, petrels, pelicans, ducks, gulls and related forms, have been modified in similar fashion. Many mammals, including the water opossum, certain shrews, muskrats, otters, mink, the hippopotamus, but especially seals, whales and porpoises, conform more or less to the same pattern. Behind the porpoises is a long line of land-dwelling ancestors, yet they are as perfectly fitted to life in the sea as the sharks who are their contemporaries, and the ichthyosaurs, who lived and died before any water-living mammal was born. And these three—porpoise, shark and ichthyosaur, so different in ancestry, are so similar in form that an ordinary observer can scarcely distinguish between them.

In all this varied group the same changes took place. Bodies grew spindle-like, necks shortened, tails enlarged, external ears and other surface adornments such as armor, feathers and hair tended to disappear, limbs became finlike, and many other organs were altered. Such was and is the road, the only road, to the sea. They who travel it find a relatively easy life. At its end land animals find escape from natural enemies. They no longer need to keep alert, because their competitors in the sea are easily outwitted. Food is abundant and gravity tugs less vigorously because of the buoyancy that water gives to their bodies. Their energies turn into growth force. The whales, who left the land for the sea, are among the largest animals that ever lived. Unfortunately dullards and heavyweights are marked for death. No land animal who took to the sea has ever given birth to a higher animal. Many of them are extinct. Many others are making a last stand against the inevitable. They are but one illustration of how the evil genius of standardization lures so many different creatures through the same easy life to the same easy death.

## III

On land the story has been much the same. Repeatedly desert climates have fallen on the earth, burning the food and evaporating the drink of animals. Oases were far apart and only those creatures which could travel rapidly could gain the necessities of life. Under such conditions many different organisms at many different times grew sim-

ilar organs for rapid locomotion. Many extinct dinosaurs and birds, many living snakes, lizards, ostriches, kangaroos, rabbits, dogs, cats, antelopes and a host of other animals, worshiped above all other gods the god of speed. The ropes of uniformity gathered them all into one corral.

Their bodies were modified for rapid movement through air. Because in running, animals rise upon their toes, feet were turned from the horizontal toward the vertical, and pads were developed to absorb the shock of impact with the ground. Toes, fingers and unnecessary leg bones were reduced. All limbs grew longer. Certain lizards, dinosaurs, marsupials and rodents rose upon their hind limbs. Although this happened in eight or more distinct cases, almost identical changes were wrought. Forelimbs degenerated, tails grew longer to give counterpoise, necks shortened. Some of these runners have been and still are beautiful machines. But like the sprinters who leave the cinder path for the broker's office, many meet a premature death when the environment changes.

Animals who dig for a living conform to their own peculiar pattern. Snouts, incisor teeth, cheek pouches and front limbs become specialized for the work of excavation. Tails, eyes and ears degenerate. Lizards, snakes, owls, swallows, rats, moles, gophers, badgers and many others have sought their fortune underground. They only succeeded in burying their hopes as well as their bodies in the same hole. The tunnel of a burrowing animal is a one-way street to perdition.

In caves where conditions are unvarying, animals grow to resemble each other. Salamanders, birds, bats and several other kinds of creatures move in their own peculiar lock step down the trail to Avernus. Their color and their sight disappear. Because food is scarce, they grow delicate organs of digestion, and stay as best they can their inevitable fate. Like their fellow degenerates at the bottom of the sea, they are slender and pale.

In the trees another pattern regulates the lives of animals. Such different creatures as the climbing perch, the tree frog, the chameleon, the woodpecker, the opossum, the tree sloth and the monkey have moved along the same channel. Their chests, ribs, shoulders and hips grew strong; their hands and feet were modified for clinging and climbing. Over thirty times in the history of life, climbers were lured by the wider possibilities of the atmosphere. Not all of them attained to true flight, but all of them developed, in so far as they were able, the same mechanism of wings, rudder, keel and hollow air-filled bones. Like creatures of other environments, they followed a marked road to heaven. When heaven failed of its promise, as it did for the flying dragons of the Mesozoic world, the deluded ones could only die. One of the sad facts of life is that habits become graven in flesh as well as in mind, and flesh cannot change as rapidly as environment. Even sadder is the fact that those mistakes which lead to the death of a race can never be a help to other races, because death cuts the ties of blood, the only adequate cables of communication. Thus it is that the sadistic mother of us all lures her diverse and repeated broods over similar paths to similar ends.

## IV

A dinosaur with a twenty-ton body and a two-ounce brain knew enough to eat when he was hungry, to avoid danger and to reproduce. His nervous organization was on a par with that of a man's stomach, which knows enough to digest its food but not itself. Throughout most of the history of life, the adaptations of animals have been predominantly physical and unconscious, because such has been the plan of nature for children who could not disobey. When man came down from the trees, he discovered the use of weapons, clothing, fire, communal living and language, no doubt with little conscious direction on his part. Only today has he begun to examine his life.

He knows that he, alone among creatures, can alter the environment to suit his needs. He has already opened his mind to new universes. He has chained the power of coal, oil and electricity to his purposes. He has checked disease and lengthened individual life. Quite naturally he has come to believe in his infinite perfectability. Physically, however, he has not advanced beyond the Neolithic Cro-Magnons of twenty thousand years ago, if indeed he has even maintained their standards. Intellectually he knows much more than the ancients, without having gained any demonstrably greater capacity for knowing. Socially he is repeating in the name of progress some of the blunders of other men before him.

Progress has always been just such a compound of gaining complexity and repetition. The gradual adaptation of a race of fishes to meet the requirements of a special environment is later repeated step by step in the adaptations of a race of seagoing reptiles. The similarity of such phenomena to the pulsations of human development is more than analogy. Although human adaptations are chiefly mental, whereas those of lower animals are chiefly physical, the same old specter of convergence hovers over both. In the same old way, man pours new wine into old bottles, and risks, when he does not reap, the same death for his mistakes.

Obviously the only escape is through an artificial strengthening of our social virtues. Perhaps some day we shall know enough biology to increase them at the source. At present we can only rely on education to enhance what little originality and decency we possess. Hope lies in a new kind of change, both in ourselves and in our environment. Nature is set against innovation, and nature is strong. But if enough men can climb to that highest rung of social evolution, species-consciousness, who can foresee what happy lands will appear beyond the horizon of the future? JOHN HODGDON BRADLEY, JR.

# Washington Notes

IF SOME of the less thick-witted of the fair-haired favorites now "close to the President" (the personnel has changed considerably in a year and a half) have sized up the situation accurately, the hard-working Hoover will go through the next session of Congress very much more serenely than he did the last. There will be, they say, far less turmoil in the Hooverian soul, and the presidential peace of mind will be vastly greater.

It is no secret among his intimates that there were frequent periods during the special session when Herbert's Quaker blood was at the boiling point, and he was restrained with great difficulty from publicly denouncing the Senate. Though such an outburst certainly would have afforded relief to his pestered spirit, it would have robbed him of his dignity and reacted against his program. As you look back now it appears that Herbert accomplished considerably more by keeping his temper than by losing it. However, the provocation was very great and he was constantly being told by the all-wise editorial writers that what he and the country needed was some show of "leadership," and that if he would only "hit out," things would be very much better for him and for everybody else. He never did "hit out" quite in the way he was urged, though it is a fact that several times he was so close to doing so that presidential "statements" which contained real Rooseveltian stuff were torn up at the last moment. I know of at least three such. Personally, I think good judgment was shown, and that "hitting out" in either the Rooseveltian or the Wilsonian manner is not the Hoover game and would not have produced the gratifying results imagined by his editorial advisers. Toward the last he did "hit out," but distinctly in the Hoover way, without name-calling or dramatic fireworks, and he got a very much better response than if he had attempted to imitate either of his more flaming predecessors.

There is, however, no denying that Mr. Hoover underwent periods of great stress during the last session and at times was irritated to the point of an outbreak. It is the contention of his friends that there will be no repetition of these periods next year, that the presidential strain in dealing with Congress will be greatly relaxed and the whole legislative side very much easier to bear than before. Furthermore, there seems to be considerable logic in the argument. In the first place, it is urged, Mr. Hoover will have no legislative program to ask of the next Congress, which fact alone is sufficient to allay irritation at congressional inaction and reduce his worries to a minimum. Whatever may be thought of the character of the redemption, there is at least room to claim that Republican campaign pledges have been redeemed. At any rate, the great controversial questions of tariff and farm relief have been got out of the way, the naval treaty has been ratified, and various items on the Hoover program, such as prohibition enforcement laws, interstate canal appropriations, federal prison reform, etc., have been enacted. There will be, of course, certain things which the administration will want of Congress and certain others it distinctly will not want, but there will be relatively few of either, and from now on the Hoover job will be largely administrative, for the legislative end is no longer vital. In brief, he has all the legislation he needs. Furthermore, the argument runs, Mr. Hoover has learned a good deal about handling Congress as a result of his first session, and will not repeat any of his mistakes. Particularly, he has learned about Senators. He has, for example, grasped the fact that the primary concern of every Senator at all times is his own renomination and reëlection. Appreciating this more fully than before, Mr. Hoover, it is claimed, will not again be at the disadvantage he was some months ago when he mistakenly assumed that certain Senators who had all the facts and believed thoroughly in a proposal were bound to vote for it. He knows better now—and will be less irritated when the facts are disregarded.

On the whole, a plausible case for a much more peaceful Herbert in 1931 than in 1930 is advanced. It is so plausible that it nearly convinces me, except that I do stick to my conviction that there can be no real peace for Herbert until prosperity returns. He will be a harassed man until that "up-curve" he so confidently predicted last May has become something more than a shadow. Moreover, he will not do any more predicting about it. So far as the White House is concerned, the effort to promote the return of prosperity by predictions, I can state on "high authority," has been abandoned. Also, it can be said upon the same authority, the White House realizes that it made a mistake in prophesying the date of the "up-curve." In the future that sort of thing is out.

But, to return to Herbert and the Senate, I think one thing said by his close friends is undoubtedly true: that he knows the individual Senators very much better than he did before, and hence will be more skillful in dealing with them. By this time, of course, he not only knows who are his friends in the Senate chamber and who are his enemies, but he knows which ones are the most effective. One in particular who, I am told, has been newly classified at the White House, is the Honorable Mr. Moses of New Hampshire. My information is that the White House has ceased to repose any confidence whatsoever in Mr. Moses, and that during the next session he will be "just another Senator" to Mr. Hoover. When it is recalled that Mr. Moses was not only the first Senator, but almost the first Republican politician of any prominence, to declare for Mr. Hoover's nomination in 1928, this situation is at least interesting. To those who know the facts and the man, however, it is not surprising. The surprising thing is that Herbert for so many months should have regarded the Honorable George as a friend. It is an illustration of the unusual political naïveté of the man. Practically everybody in politics who knows his way around at all knows that when George declared for Hoover in 1920, he was not in the least inspired by any liking for that gentleman. Purely local conditions in New Hampshire led him to advocate Hoover, and an early declaration for him was simply smart politics.

During the campaign the worst and most inexcusable Republican blunder was made by Mr. Moses, whose letter to his North Carolina friend urging the publication of some particularly rotten anti-Catholic stuff was more than anything else responsible for throwing the religious issue

into Mr. Hoover's camp. Luckily for Mr. Moses, the exposure came too late for the Democrats to make effective use of it, but it might have been extremely costly. It might have made Mr. Moses the Burchard of the 1928 campaign, and it undoubtedly was a stupid trick. However, in the overwhelming Republican landslide, the Moses blunder was deeply buried and the Honorable George for quite a while after the election was supposed to be very close to the administration. In fact, he posed as an administration adviser and was regarded by Herbert as quite a devoted friend. Those who knew the congenital talents of George as a michief-maker, his incurable itch to be recognized as the Senate wit and the character of his "I told Hoover today" after-dinner stories, were at all times doubtful of his devotion and were certain that the pretense would not last long.

What first began to give the White House a distaste for George was the extraordinary number of preëlection promises of presidential spoils which he made during the campaign and which he expected Herbert to fulfill. Several of these were ambassadorships, and information of the promises came as quite a surprise to Herbert. In the main the gentlemen to whom George had made promises were taken care of, but not in a way which wholly satisfied either them or George. The net result was resentment on both sides—resentment on the part of Hoover that he was being pushed too hard by George and that George had promised too much; and resentment on the part of George that he had made these promises in the interests of Mr. Hoover and not in his own. He felt that they should be carried out, particularly as the men involved had contributed largely to the success of the "cause."

The result of all this was that for several months before the adjournment of the Senate there had been a noticeable absence of affection between the White House and the New Hampshire wise-cracker. However, there was no open demonstration of ill feeling until George entered the Treaty fight. No one, of course, was surprised when he lined up with Hiram Johnson and the little group of diehards against the Treaty. That was his natural position, and he took it. What was surprising, however, was the character of the speech he made against it, for it bristled with bitter personalities.

To those who have followed the Moses-Hoover relation, the sly slaps at Herbert and the scathing attack on Stimson were the Moses way of expressing resentment at his failure to get what he wanted from the State Department. His bitterness was not so much against the Treaty as against the Treaty champions. At least that is the way it seemed to the more acute observers of the Washington scene. Personally, it appeared to me to be a typical Moses speech. I, however, agree that it has lowered almost to the vanishing point the esteem in which he is held at the White House. So far as the White House is concerned, George in the future will be just a Senator—not a friend. His capacity as a mischief-maker is recognized and discounted.

As for "Our Harry," as his New York brothers insist upon calling Mr. Stimson, I do not think he came out of the Treaty fight badly at all. It is true that he is not popular in Washington, but when have we had a popular Secretary of State? Was Kellogg popular? Or Hughes? Or the late Bryan? "Our Harry" is hammered pretty hard at times, but he is subjected to nothing like the ridicule and denunciation that were the portion of "Nervous Nellie" during the Coolidge regime. With the Treaty out of the way, I think the effort to make "Our Harry" the goat of the Cabinet will bog down for the simple reason that there seem to be no problems in the State Department now calculated to create any real controversy. For a year or so, anyway, his job promises to be a very non-spectacular one..

Washington. T. R. B.

## Mother and Son

Now all day long the man who is not dead
Hastens the dark with inattentive eyes;
The lady of the white hand, of the erect head
Stares at the cover, leans for the son's replies
At last to her importunate womanhood,
That hand of death laid on the living bed—
Such is the fierce compositor of blood.

She waits; he lies upon the bed of sin
Where greed, avarice, anger writhed and slept
Till to their silence they were gathered in;
There, fallen with time, his proud and wicked kin
Once fired the passions that were never kept
In the permanent heart; and there his mother lay,
A battered marble, on his first birthday.

Because of this she cannot will her hand
Up to the bed, nor break the manacle
That exile sets upon her stern command
That he should say the time is beautiful,
Transfigured with her own devouring light:
The sick man craves the impalpable night.

Loosed betwixt eye and lid the swimming beams
Of memory—that school of cuttlefish—
Rise to the air, plunge into the cold streams:
Rising and plunging the half-forgotten wish
To tear his heart out in some slow disgrace
And freeze the hue of terror to her face.

Hate, misery and fear beat off his heart
To the dry fury of the woman's mind:
The son, prone in his autumn, moves apart
A seed blown upon a returning wind.
O child! be vigilant till towards the south,
On the flowered wall all the sweet afternoon,
That reach of sun, swift as the cottonmouth,
Strikes at the black crucifix on her breast,
Where the cold dusk comes suddenly to rest
Mortality will speak the victor soon!

The dreary flies, lazy and casual,
Stick to the ceiling, buzz along the wall:
O heart! the spider shuffles from the mold
Weaving between the pinks and grapes, his pall!
The bright wallpaper imperishably old
Uncurls and flutters; it will never fall.

ALLEN TATE.

# Victor Branford

IT IS WITH a sense of personal insufficiency, almost of guilt, that I find myself writing of Victor Branford now, upon hearing from his old master and colleague, Patrick Geddes, that he died at Hastings in June, at the age of sixty-six. What is significant in an obituary could so much better be said during the subject's lifetime, if only we had the courage then to utter that large and impersonal note which death brings to our judgments, even in the midst of bereavement. Victor Branford was a remarkable man, a pregnant thinker; but, being out of the fashions of his time, he was scarcely known in America, and in England, where he led an active, indefatigable life, he was hardly better appreciated, although he had a wide circle of acquaintances, and moved freely among financiers and scholars.

Victor Branford was a unique combination of the man of affairs and the speculative thinker, a type England has so often produced from the time of Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Francis Bacon. By profession, he belonged to the abstemious guild of certified accountants, the medical diagnosticians, as he used to say, of business; by interest and attainment, he was a sociologist, a historian and a philosopher; and in his character were mingled a worldly shrewdness, an ability to appraise all the mischief and madness of his fellows, with a wild devotion to losing causes and remote ideals. He looked the Elizabethan, too: the long narrow head, the pointed beard, the trim body, the high forehead and the thin nervous lips; it was easier to imagine him in doublet and hose than it was to accept him in the conventional top hat and morning coat of the City. This combination of aristocrat and adventurer, gentleman and scholar, which was the peculiar attribute of the Renaissance in England, was in his very marrow; and if he knew all the weaknesses of the Renaissance culture, brought up, as he used to put it, in the dregs of it, he belonged by heart and manner to the Olympians.

Victor Branford was not at home in our age; for though, as a sociologist, he understood every manifestation of it, with a thoroughness and a capacity for detail that few of his contemporaries could muster, he had too keen a consciousness of its defects, too deep a sense of a higher human norm, to accept its canons of success. His very prose belonged to the Elizabethan period, without any conscious effort, like that of the author of "Arabia Deserta," to make it so. There was the same looseness of texture, the same abundance of metaphor, the same richness of feeling even in the colder moments of analysis; indeed, it had the Elizabethan defect of being overwrought and of dragging the subject down like a dahlia stalk through the mere weight of efflorescence. This partly accounts, no doubt, for the fact that his books, which were compact with fresh and original thought, had so little influence in the circles to which they were addressed. His thinking had the defects of his qualities. He brought to science and social observation not merely a good eye and an analytical judgment; he brought the whole man, with his capacity for feeling and emotion; and he also brought, perhaps, some of those conflicts which were inherent in the dual relation of being a financier in an unregenerate order of society, and an idealist too conscious of these innate discrepancies to rationalize them.

Victor Branford's first book of importance was his "Interpretations and Forecasts," which was published by Mitchell Kennerley in America on the eve of the Great War; and the book that sums up his observations, his philosophy of art and science and religion and life, is "Science and Sanctity"—a treatise whose audacious title is in itself a volume. By indefatigable effort, he founded the Sociological Society in London in 1904, and by continuous preaching and practice he did his utmost to carry on the substantial tradition of August Comte and Frédéric Le Play, endeavoring to make sociology a true observational science, dealing not with abstractions, such as Conflict, Coöperation, the Herd Instinct, the Common Will, but with the actual processes and functions of definite regional societies. This method has been independently developed and fruitfully used by the American school of anthropologists in dealing with primitive peoples; but because of their original bias, the anthropologists have been reluctant to take over more complex societies, particularly contemporary ones; and in their isolation of the concept of culture, they have too complacently ignored the data of geography and psychology. Unlike the American sociologists who have at last adopted the notion of the survey as an instrument of exact thought in sociology, Victor Branford did not confine the survey to the purely spatial society of the present, without reference to its complex historical filiation, its heritage of mores, customs, laws, ideas and ideals. Outdoor observation was for him an essential of both life and thought: a sociology of the chair was little better than so much stuffed upholstery for the mind; and Branford invented many ingenious ways of seeing the country, one of them, as I remember, from the top of a moving van—a useful expedient in a countryside lined with thick hedges and high walls.

Walking with Branford through Westminster or Oxford or the New Forest was one of the liveliest pleasures in the world: every stone came to life, and the very advertisements on the hoardings became pregnant commentaries upon our venal and life-starved civilization. His conversation had something his books lacked: a certain spice of worldly observation that might have become cynicism in a less generous soul, or have led to despair in a less hopeful one. He would gleefully point out some sinister exhibition of the social process, as in the combination of a bank with a meeting hall in the Methodist center in Westminster, or the juxtaposition of the bust of Cecil Rhodes with the new examination buildings in Oxford, which sorted out the brains of an imperial bureaucracy; and though he loved Oxford, he would repeat with delight the two comments of a young girl, just fresh from Paraguay, with whom he had walked along High Street: "How beautiful these young men are. . . ." Pause. "And how stupid they look!" He delighted in ritual and all manner of beauty, from the curve of a girl's ankle to the grand interior of the Westminster Cathedral: but his own life was an abstemious one, and the bed that he slept on so often in his study might have served in the penitential cell of an austere monastery.

Acquainted with the statistical predictions of that remarkable prophet of modern warfare, Jean de Bloch, and

himself a keen observer in the financial centers of Europe, Branford was perhaps less surprised by the outbreak of the European War than were any of his contemporaries. As early as 1911, he circulated a memorandum among his intellectual associates, pointing out that unless there was a decisive reversal in policy, the nations of Europe would be at each other's throats by 1915. He proposed, therefore, to issue a series of books which would analyze the economic and spiritual causes of the approaching conflict—the lack of vital economy, the competition of rival megalopolises, the debauchery of all ideal values in a slavish financial and bureaucratic and military regime—and would, before the actual conflict broke out, lay down a positive program of reconstruction which might either help avert the disaster or salvage the ruins. This proposal sounded so fantastic even to watchful, sober minds in 1911 that Branford was forced to drop it; but he had the mournful triumph of seeing his prophecy come true, and towards the end of the War, in the midst of the intellectual helter-skelter, he began to publish—with the distant advice and collaboration of his colleague Geddes—a series of books called "The Making of the Future," in which he and his contributors sought to embody a more adequate conception of life, economics and polity.

Neither these books, nor Branford's series of post-war pamphlets, called "Papers for the Present," got the attention they deserved; although, if I am not mistaken, his pamphlet "The Drift to Revolution" has a fairly wide circulation. In that pamphlet Branford analyzed the historic aims and programs of the "party of order" and the "party of revolution." He showed how one tended to beget the other: hence an oscillation of ferocious dictatorships, and a deadlock in the fulfillment of all that was positive in their programs. He suggested a composition of forces: not a compromise which would achieve nothing that either party sought, but a disinterested effort to get beyond the regime of power into one which would depend more completely upon the verified knowledge of science, and that nonpartisan good will which is latent in all the arts and professions. This he called the party of the Third Alternative, differing from the other two in that its emphasis was not upon abstract shibboleths, but upon definite, concrete, realizable aims: reforestation, better houses, more adequately designed towns, coöperative agriculture, socialized credit, regenerated schools. An expert in finance, he proposed to substitute insurance, plus a definite charge for actual service, for the haphazard and often extortionate incidence of interest. He had no doubt that finance and industry could bring forth disinterested minds, quite as much as medicine and science: indeed, he was one of them; and though he had much in common with Thorstein Veblen, whose genius he was one of the first in Europe to recognize and hail, he was far from placing his hopes for a more vital and better integrated society in the ministrations of some single class, such as the engineers. He knew that social counterpoint was a more complex matter; and his ideal figure for a fine society was that of a symphony orchestra.

From Victor Branford's multifarious writings the patient reader can glean a wealth of ideas and *aperçus*: but above all, he will find the image of a fine and impassioned intelligence, at times willful, at times a little blind; but always vigorous, humane and filled with the ecstasy of life. He was a poet of affairs. Watching his frail and exhausted body lying on a sofa in the evening for a brief period of recuperation before the usual late London dinner, seeing the man's whole being suddenly take fire with an idea, sharing, as he paced back and forth across the room, the tremor of his intellectual excitement, I learned a decisive spiritual lesson: namely, that only dead thoughts can be separated from the emotions—as only dead brains can be separated from the heart and the other organs of the body. In a world filled with such deadness and futility, this man was a flame. Sometimes that flame burned smokily; but it was never for lack of fuel. His own life was an exhibition of the title he chose for his masterwork: "Science and Sanctity."

LEWIS MUMFORD.

# *TWO COMMUNICATIONS*

## Brookings Institution and St. Lawrence Power

SIR: Now that Governor Roosevelt of New York has been authorized by the legislature to explore the possibilities of a publicly owned and operated power development on the St. Lawrence River, the question whether any considerable part of the energy there generated can be economically transmitted to the metropolitan area around New York City assumes key importance. For, if this cannot be done, there appears to be no adequate market elsewhere for the power to be developed, and the project cannot pay for itself.

In "The St. Lawrence Navigation and Power Project," a book issued by the Brookings Institution, a privately endowed research organization of Washington, D. C., it is held that current from the waters of the international section of the St. Lawrence, on the boundary between New York state and the Province of Ontario, cannot be generated and transmitted to the New York City district at a cost low enough to compete with locally generated steam power. This is held to be the only market now ready to absorb *all* the current to be made available by the proposed development. The inference follows that the whole project of a public development on the river is economically unsound, unless before construction is undertaken, contracts for the use of all current to be generated can be made with industrial establishments to be created anew at the river—a wholly unlikely prospect.

The argument supporting this conclusion seems irritatingly biased and misleading. The power section of the book in which this question is discussed consists of a separate report signed by Sanderson and Porter, engineers. The emphasis placed on the impracticability of transmitting St. Lawrence current to New York City is striking. "This study," the authors say, "is concerned mainly with the bulk transmission of the St. Lawrence energy available to the United States to either of the two load centers—the metropolitan district around New York and the New England district around Boston." Then they say, "The project [to send St. Lawrence current to the metropolitan district] is economically unsound." This is explained by the statement that "the costs of generation and transmission of the energy

are greater than the cost of equivalent steam energy generated locally." And again: "It is shown subsequently that the cost of St. Lawrence energy delivered at the metropolitan district is in excess of the cost of energy generated locally by steam plants, and that therefore such delivery of transmitted energy is not economical and in all probability will never [sic] be undertaken." And again: "The greater metropolitan market . . . has been proved to be economically unsound."

Right at the start the authors of the Brookings report break both with common practice and with the report, "St. Lawrence Waterway Project," prepared by the Joint Board which was appointed on March 14, 1924, by the American and Canadian governments. They have used as the measure of the power possibilities of the St. Lawrence project the supply of water estimated to go into the Great Lakes known as the "mean net supply," rather than the water discharged from the Lakes into the St. Lawrence River. The latter is almost always used because it can be measured, and in this case has been, with a probable plus or minus error of not more than 5 percent. The "mean net supply," on the other hand, is an indeterminable quantity based upon the inflow of water into the Lakes plus the rainfall *on* the Lakes minus the evaporation from the surface of the Lakes. None of these three factors has been accurately determined and all are very difficult to determine accurately. There are no rain gauges out in the Lakes, and the estimate of evaporation is obviously full of uncertainties. For these reasons the attempted estimate of "mean net supply" is held to be open to an error at least five times as great as is the measurement of the discharge into the river.

The justification employed by the authors for the use of their "mean net supply" is an assumed "progressive lowering of the lake levels." As the levels of the Great Lakes have now returned from the low levels of five years ago to levels almost the highest in their recorded history, the authors' assumption concerning them and the calculations based thereon are clearly erroneous. Further, the authors have assumed a continuous diversion into the Chicago drainage canal of 8,500 cubic feet per second. However, the United States Supreme Court has since provided for a material reduction of this diversion. The net effect of these two erroneous assumptions, together with the use of "mean net supply," is to make the estimate of power possibilities much too low. The assumption of only 750,000 kilowatts can be raised to at least 870,000 kilowatts. So much as to available power.

### Cheaper Power in New York City

With regard to its disposition, the estimates in the report assume that the entire American share of the current generated (estimated at one-half of the total) must necessarily be transmitted to the area in and around New York City. A much more logical policy would be to use, say, one-quarter of the power at or near the St. Lawrence River, one-quarter in central New York and the remaining half in the metropolitan area. Making this one change, but otherwise accepting the assumed data of the report, the price of St. Lawrence current ready for the New York City distribution system will figure about 5 mills as contrasted with the 5.8 mills given in the report as the whole cost of steam current.

The authors of that part of the book which deals with the navigation phase of the project saw fit to add 20 percent to the estimate of cost of the navigation features as made by the Joint Board on the ground that past estimates of inland-waterway projects have usually been too low by at least this percentage. This may have been the warrant for the addition by Sanderson and Porter of a similar percentage, amounting to $21,600,000, to the cost of the power plant to cover "omissions and contingencies." Such an item is wholly unknown in engineering estimates on power plants. It is especially surprising in view of the existence of a number of large-scale power plants on these waters. Nor are items of such size negligible on a project the overall cost of which is placed at $150,000,000. Correcting the estimated cost of power delivered to Newark simply by this unwarranted 20 percent and accepting every other assumption of the report would make the cost of current 5.14 mills per kilowatt hour. This figure is lower than the cost of electric power derived from steam in Newark, stated in the Brookings report to be 5.69 mills per kilowatt hour. If the estimates are otherwise correct, the St. Lawrence current would sell competitively. Even if the cost were the same, it has usually been assumed that for social reasons water power should be given the preference over steam in order to save coal and to save water which would otherwise "run to the sea" without doing any useful work.

### Interest Charges

Again, the $20,700,000 item added to the cost of the power plant for "interest during construction" appears to be perhaps twice as large as it should be. The Joint Board's report is quoted as saying that "the preliminary and construction period will cover about eight years." But funds are not required in any great amount during the preparatory or drafting period. Expenditures of consequence are made only during the construction period, which is estimated by the Joint Board at seven years. This estimate, however, covers the time required to open the entire waterway from Lake Ontario to Montreal. Since no allowance was made in the Joint Board's estimates for interest during construction—a common practice on public work—the Board frankly admits that its time estimates are based on the use of the same construction equipment on different sections of the whole undertaking, of which the building of the power plant at Barnhart Island is but one. The Conowingo plant on the Susquehanna near the Maryland-Pennsylvania border was in commercial operation within nine days less than two years after the first construction camp was begun, and in complete operation nine months later. Four years is a probable construction period for the St. Lawrence power plant. Therefore interest should be charged on the whole cost for two years at 4 percent, or $10,350,000. The authors, "assuming funds expended at a uniform rate" over eight years, have charged a total of 16 percent or $20,700,000—that is to say, perhaps twice too much.

The cost of the 2,000 miles of transmission line is estimated at $26,000 a mile, or $52,000,000. No check on such a figure can be made without an extended and costly field survey. This whole report is said to have cost the Brookings Institution $2,500. Obviously this estimate of the cost of the line must have been at best a very rough

computation. A 220-kilowatt line recently built by the Ontario Hydroelectric Commission cost $15,000 a mile.

Another tidy little item of $22,500,000 (the whole cost of the transmission line is $52,000,000, exclusive of this item) is tucked in for twenty-seven miles of underground cable to carry current to Hell Gate station from the terminus of the transmission line at Elmhurst—a point twenty miles to the north of the northern boundary of New York City. Just why this line should be put underground for such a distance is not stated. The estimated cost is based on "a careful analysis . . . made for another purpose." It is unlikely, however, that any considerable percentage of this quite exceptional expense will ever be incurred, especially as it is probable that a very large proportion of this current will reach its point of use without passing through Hell Gate station.

### Will Coal Be Cheaper?

The report further assumes that the cost of coal will not materially increase in the next twenty years, an assumption which is possibly unwise. If this assumption had been held valid, would the Conowingo installation have been made? The report also assumes that there will continue to be a drop in the cost of steam-generated power corresponding to that which has taken place in recent years. This seems unduly optimistic. Improvements in coal economy are becoming more and more difficult and the investment costs necessary to secure them are becoming greater and greater. Also, it is incorrectly assumed that the price of coal at New England points is the same as for New York City and Newark.

While the report states that the cost would not be materially different if the locks and other facilities necessitated by a waterway were omitted, it is difficult to believe that this is so. Certainly some allowance in figuring the cost of current should be made for navigation features properly included in the estimates, even if the ship canal as a whole is not now undertaken.

A good deal is made in the report of the fact that interest is figured at only 4 percent. Yet the total fixed charges are put at 12 percent, which is too high if the interest is only 4 percent. This figure would be high enough to include an interest charge of 6 percent.

The statement that a transmission system carrying St. Lawrence current to the metropolitan area would have to be supplemented by a steam station capable of generating 50 percent of the transmitted supply is absurd. An auxiliary steam plant is actually needed only when the fluctuations in stream flow are very great. The St. Lawrence, by reason of the storage capacity of the Great Lakes, has a relatively steady flow. The metropolitan area already has ample steam capacity to absorb half the St. Lawrence power, and the region with Utica as a center could absorb a quarter of it. Hence, at the utmost, a steam plant for supplementing the remaining quarter, assumed to be used locally at the river, is all that is needed. In these days when interconnections extend over ever widening areas, former requirements as to surplus capacity become obsolete.

To find out at just what figure current from the St. Lawrence can be put down in New York City will require estimates much more carefully made than those which we are discussing. But enough has been said to show that there is an ample margin below the cost of steam current as now generated, or as it is likely to be generated, in the period in which we are interested.

The authors, having disposed of New York City, which is admitted as a market to be ready for the entire American share, say "The . . . most promising market for St. Lawrence energy is . . . at the river." An electro-chemical, electro-metallurgical or similar load is imperative! Unless such a load can be assured in advance it seems impossible to develop any profitable outlet for St. Lawrence power! Curiously enough, this is quite in contrast with the attitude of the Canadian authorities, who are quoted as claiming that Ontario can readily absorb the half belonging to Canada.

As publications of the Brookings Institution are intended to have a public, as contrasted with a private, character and usefulness, it would have been better had the reader been advised of the business connections of the two engineers upon whom is placed the whole responsibility for the power findings. "Who's Who" gives them as follows:

> E. N. Sanderson, engineer. Mem. engring firm Sanderson & Porter, New York; pres. Federal Light & Traction Co., and officer or dir. numerous pub. utility corpns.
>
> H. H. Porter, pub. utility official; pres. Am. Water Works & Electric Co. [a $386,000,000 corporation]; Brooklyn City R. R. Co.; chmn. bd. W. Penn Electric Co.; v. p. Queensboro Gas & Electric Co.; dir. Washington Water Power Co.; W. Penn Rys. Co.; W. Penn Power Co.

Social progress lags because of a widespread lack of faith occasioned by a too frequently occurring "two plus two equals four" technology whose arithmetic is unassailable, but whose assumptions are unwarranted, biased or false. Yet a reasonable dependence upon our educational and technical institutions must be attained if we are ever to induce democracy to lay aside the hunch and thumb rule in favor of scientific studies of economy and efficiency. Mere honesty of purpose on the part of the body sponsoring such a study, which those acquainted with Director Moulton and his associates in the Brookings Institution will accept as 100 percent, will not suffice. We ought to be able to assume that such an institution, commanding ready access to all known sources of information, will keep its eyes wide open to the possibilities of error due to narrowness of viewpoint or to nearly inevitable prejudices born of business associations or interests.

Philadelphia, Pa. Morris Llewellyn Cooke.

## Mr. Moulton Replies

SIR: Mr. Cooke has a very evident desire to shed light upon a problem of great public importance, and I am glad of the opportunity offered by The New Republic to discuss the issues involved. Mr. Cooke implies that, inasmuch as the principal officials of the firm of Sanderson and Porter have connections with certain public-utility enterprises, the firm is inevitably prejudiced against the development of St. Lawrence power in general, particularly against its sale in the metropolitan area of New York; and that my associates and I have naïvely al-

lowed ourselves to be imposed upon. A few words as to the reasons for selecting this engineering firm for the collaboration are therefore necessary.

### Choosing Competent Engineers

In none of the official reports favoring the St. Lawrence project was there made any careful appraisal of the market possibilities for power. It was, however, commonly assumed that the power could be sold at a price not only sufficient to yield a return on the investment in power development, but also to cover a substantial part of the costs attributable to navigation. If our analysis of the project was to be complete, it was therefore necessary to consider the markets for power, and since the issues involved were of a technical character, it was necessary to secure the assistance of competent engineers. We sought the advice of three independent engineers of high standing, in whose integrity and judgment we had confidence, as to where we could obtain engineering coöperation. The firm of Sanderson and Porter was suggested, and all endorsed them as a firm of high technical competence and unbiased character. In our numerous conferences with members of this firm, we never found the slightest evidence of antagonism to the sale of this power in New York City or elsewhere. Indeed, their first impression was that the power might be economically marketed in New York City. After the report was completed, we had the findings examined by engineers of a utility company located in another part of the country, and the cost estimates and the analysis in general were pronounced eminently reasonable.

Since Mr. Cooke has raised the charge of bias, we must ask whether there is any reason why power companies should oppose the sale of St. Lawrence power in New York under the plan of development favored by the Joint Engineering Board. The governments of the United States and Canada were to build the generating plants on the river, but the transmission and distribution were to be carried out by private enterprise. If any power company could purchase the St. Lawrence power more cheaply than it could produce it, or purchase it elsewhere, would it not stand to gain by doing so? It is apparent that power companies might oppose the development of a competing government transmission and distribution system; but government operation was not contemplated in the plan of the Joint Board.

In any event, Sanderson and Porter did not reach a conclusion hostile to the development of the St. Lawrence power or to its sale in the metropolitan area. They inquired first whether all of this power could be economically marketed in New York or New England, over an independent transmission system, and on this they reached a negative answer. They did conclude, however, that it would pay if one-half of the power could be disposed of for manufacturing purposes near the river, one-fourth being consumed in central New York, as soon as the New York Central is electrified, the remainder being distributed through a future interconnected system to New England or "down through New York, New Jersey, and Philadelphia, and possibly farther south" (p. 671). Mr. Cooke is therefore entirely unwarranted in saying that they assumed that "the *entire* American share of the current generated must *necessarily* be transmitted to the area in and around New York City," and that they imply that "before construction is undertaken, contracts for the use of all current should be made with industrial establishments to be created anew at the river." In fact, the final conclusion of Sanderson and Porter is not greatly different from Mr. Cooke's own, which calls for the sale of one-fourth at the river, one-fourth in central New York, and 50 percent in New York City.

Mr. Cooke, however, clearly differs from Sanderson and Porter in his belief that a substantial proportion of the St. Lawrence power can be economically marketed in New York over an independent transmission system. He seeks to show that Sanderson and Porter's analysis of this possibility is biased throughout. He does not pretend to have made a first-hand investigation of the cost factors involved; his method is to challenge assumptions and cost computations and thus to cast doubt upon the analysis as a whole. It is therefore necessary that we test the quality of Mr. Cooke's own analysis. Many of the points raised involve questions of fact and of economic analysis, and these I feel competent to discuss. To conserve space, attention is confined to major issues:

(1) In figuring the cost of delivering power to New York City, Sanderson and Porter assumed that "in order to show as favorable a case as possible for this transmission," the entire available United States share was to go to the metropolitan area (p. 634); and the rate worked out at an average of 6.48 mills per kilowatt hour. Mr. Cooke says that if we assume that only one-half of this power goes to New York City, "but otherwise accepting the assumed data of the report, the price of St. Lawrence current ready for the New York City distribution system will figure about five mills." Since the estimated cost of steam-generated current produced locally is 5.69 mills, Mr. Cooke feels that he has completely proved his case with this point alone. Unfortunately, he submits no evidence to support the unusual contention that one-half the power can be transmitted at a lower unit cost than all of it.

### Adding 20 Percent for Contingencies

(2) Mr. Cooke objects to the addition of "20 percent for omissions and contingencies" to the Joint Board's estimates of costs, saying that "such an item is wholly unknown in engineering estimates on power plants. It is especially surprising in view of the existence of a number of large-scale power plants on these waters." The justification for this increase is found on pages 89-91 of my own analysis of the cost of the waterway, in which I show that large-scale public enterprises of this sort have usually greatly overrun the estimates. Moreover, with reference to this particular project, I quote statements from the Hugh L. Cooper Company—which has probably given more study to the St. Lawrence than any other engineering group—and also from the Joint Board of Engineers, which prove the very tentative character of present cost estimates. The peculiar difficulties here are, first, that the problem of ice control has not been solved, and second, that "coffer dams will have to be placed when four and one-half times as much water is being discharged as has been hitherto successfully controlled." Incidentally, Cooper

says that "existing plants on both sides of the river prove that the only form of power industry that can subsist under present ice conditions are industries given over entirely to chemical production where interruptions to service are relatively unimportant."

(3) Mr. Cooke holds that Sanderson and Porter's contention that "a reserve of steam power equal to 50 percent of the St. Lawrence power is absurd," citing the relatively steady flow of the St. Lawrence as evidence. Sanderson and Porter made a careful analysis of the reliability requirements in New York City and also of the ice problem on the St. Lawrence, mentioned by Cooper above, to which Mr. Cooke has apparently given no consideration. But in any event the cost of this relay steam plant, amounting to 1.23 mills per kilowatt hour, is not included by Sanderson and Porter in their figure of 6.48 mills. If added, the cost becomes 7.71 mills for the St. Lawrence power, as compared with 5.69 for local steam power.

(4) Interest during construction, which the Joint Board did not include at all, is computed by Sanderson and Porter at 4 percent for an average of four years, on the assumption that it would take eight years to complete the project. Mr. Cooke says the project can be built in four years, inasmuch as "time estimates are based on using the same construction equipment on different sections, of which the building of the power plant at Barnhart Island is but one." Sanderson and Porter's analysis is in conformity with that of the Joint Board of Engineers and Mr. Cooke's is not. The Joint Board (Appendix G: Construction Program) states that "the time required to complete the through navigation project is largely dependent upon the works in the International Rapids Section (which is the principal power section), as there the expenditure is larger than in other sections and the works are more difficult to execute. . . . Maximum economy will be secured by choosing a construction period of about seven years for the heaviest part of the work. . . . The program is based upon completion in seven years after actual construction is begun, with the understanding that unforeseen conditions may force an extension of the time." Sanderson and Porter took eight years because of the possibility of unforeseen delays and because of the fact that it usually requires some little time after the completion of a project before it can be operated commercially. At Conowingo work did not have to be suspended for long periods each winter; there were no navigation complications, no serious problems of ice control, and the volume of water to be controlled was very much less.

### Computing the Fixed Charges

(5) Mr. Cooke says that "a good deal is made in the report of the fact that interest is figured at only 4 percent, yet the total fixed charges are put at 12 percent, which is too high if the interest is only 4 percent. This figure would be high enough to include an interest charge of 6 percent." Mr. Cooke is here in error as to the facts. The 4-percent rate is used in two connections, and in neither case was it comprised within total fixed charges of 12 percent. It was used first for interest during construction, where, if 6 percent had been employed, the capital cost would have been increased by $10,350,000. It was used, second, as an annual rate on the cost of generating plant, $150,000,000, making $6,000,000 a year instead of $9,000,000, at a rate of 6 percent. The 12 percent for fixed charges, to which Mr. Cooke refers, occurred in connection with the annual charges on the transmission system and on the relay steam plant. These, under the plan, were to be built by private enterprise, and a 4-percent interest rate was not assumed, the 12 percent being a single figure for interest, profit, depreciation, maintenance, insurance and taxes. For the competing steam plant, 12.5 percent was taken.

### Steam-Generated Power

(6) Mr. Cooke states that the report "assumes that there will continue to be a drop in the cost of steam-generated power corresponding to that which has taken place in recent years," and that this is probably not correct. Mr. Cooke has apparently not read the report carefully in this connection. Sanderson and Porter do not contend that costs will continue to drop at a rate "corresponding" with that of recent years; they merely forsee "substantial" further reductions. And, in any event, they take as a basis for their estimates of steam costs a fuel efficiency which is actually less than that which has already been attained in some of the best plants (pp. 665-67). Had they taken the probable cost a decade hence, the figure of 5.69 mills might have been reduced to something like 5 mills.

(7) As respects coal costs, Mr. Cooke says the assumption that the price of coal will not materially increase in the next twenty years "is possibly unwise." It may be pointed out that Sanderson and Porter took as a base price $2.25 a ton, and that the price has already declined to $2.00 and less in the mining districts from which the coal in question would come. The belief that coal prices will not materially increase in the period in question is concurred in by coal economists of the Brookings Institution.

With reference to the cost of the transmission line, Mr. Cooke cites an Ontario figure of $15,000 a mile as presumptive evidence that Sanderson and Porter's estimate of $28,000 is excessive. He does not, however, consider possible differences in conditions in New York and Ontario, or that under the government system in Ontario some elements of cost are omitted which have to be included in private undertakings. Moreover, if the case were to be proved by analogy one might point to the estimate recently made by the engineers of the Reclamation Service of the cost of a 220-kilovolt transmission line from the Colorado River to Los Angeles, which is $33,000 per mile.

Mr. Cooke raises two other points of a technical character on which I do not venture an opinion. The first relates to the method of computing the volume of power to be generated, and the second to the necessity of an underground cable from Elmhurst to Hell Gate station.

The reviewer rightly says that agencies such as the Brookings Institution, by virtue of their quasi-public character, have a real responsibility to make certain that the studies which they sponsor are of a genuinely scientific character. This responsibility we endeavor at all times to fulfill; and we welcome sincere criticism. But if a critic is to contribute to knowledge and understanding he must present accurately the conclusions of the study under review; he

must make a judicial appraisal of the analysis as a whole; and where doubtful points occur he must in every case present argument or evidence in support of his own position.

Washington, D. C. HAROLD G. MOULTON.

## Mr. Cooke in Rebuttal

SIR: Even power has its Arcady! The Sanderson and Porter report, after having been carefully scrutinized by the power savants at the Brookings Institution, was submitted to certain of the associates of Samuel Insull of Chicago and okayed by them. This is certainly a simple technique! One wonders whether Senator Norris could even now save time on Muscle Shoals by calling in Sidney Z. Mitchell.

There are more reasons than one why a power company might refuse to buy St. Lawrence current even though it could purchase it more cheaply than it could produce it. To assume otherwise would be to deny the wide spreading comity between the various power interests. The block of power under discussion represents a very large percentage of all the power used in New York City. A purchase at a known price based on known conditions would ultimately have to be reflected in rates.

The heavy expense for the St. Lawrence-New York transmission line lies at the New York City end. Having disposed of half the current up state, we used the data in the report itself in subtracting the added expense of transmitting all the current rather than half of it.

That Sanderson and Porter did not consider that the delivery of 50 percent of the current to New York City required further steam capacity is indicated by their failure to include a covering item in their original estimates. If actually required, additional steam capacity would have been as legitimate a part of this estimate as the generating station itself. The necessarily problematical period for construction is relatively unimportant in the whole discussion. But it is illuminating to see how it has been influenced in the report by Mr. Moulton's personal conclusions as to the reliability of engineering estimates.

It is, of course, reassuring to know that the Brookings Institution now apparently feels that current from the St. Lawrence can be economically transmitted to New York City. But the public interest lies in the fact that a report published by it argues emphatically to the exact contrary.

M. L. C.

# *CORRESPONDENCE*

## Sacco-Vanzetti Memorial Demonstrations

SIR: August 22, the third anniversary of the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti, finds the United States in the midst of one of the blackest periods of political persecution this country has ever known.

Three years after the murder by Massachusetts of a rebel fish peddler and a poor shoemaker stirred the whole world to impassioned protest, the same burning issues which made martyrs of Sacco and Vanzetti threaten the liberty and the lives of countless political prisoners in the United States today.

Six young workers come to trial in Atlanta, Georgia, in September, facing death sentences, for the crime of protesting against unemployment and demanding political, economic, and social equality for Negroes. They must not be allowed to meet the same tragic fate as Sacco and Vanzetti.

In California, Mooney and Billings continue to remain, after thirteen years in prison, symbols of the unreasoning brutality that is visited upon those who struggle to improve the condition of labor.

Six labor organizers are serving sentences in San Quentin and Folsom prisons for attempting to organize workers in the fruit-growing Imperial Valley. Decided on the testimony of *agents provocateurs* and discredited "labor experts," their case is one of the clearest railroadings ever known. But they are in jail today, with the maximum sentence—3 to 42 years each.

Foster, Minor, Amter and Raymond, if released on parole October 21, as recommended by the Parole Commission, face the obvious necessity of remaining mute and inactive if they are not to be clapped into jail at the slightest attempt which can be identified with the political activity to which they have devoted their lives.

The history of these and literally hundreds of other cases leaves room for no other conclusion than that these men and women are persecuted—in some cases facing death—for the expression of their political opinions, not for the commission of any crime.

The International Labor Defense wishes to make the Sacco-Vanzetti Memorial Demonstration not merely an occasion for remembering the tragedy which rocked the entire civilized world. It must be as well a time of protest from all those who, however they may disagree with opinions held by some of the victims of persecution, unite on the issue of freedom for political thought and expression.

It is to urge the participation of all such individuals at Union Square in New York, on Boston Common in Boston, in every local Sacco-Vanzetti demonstration on August 22, that we make this appeal through The New Republic. Speakers who were active in the Sacco-Vanzetti struggle, regardless of political affiliation, will be on the platforms.

In the interest of a vital issue on which we must all make common cause—demonstrate on August 22!

J. LOUIS ENGDAHL,
New York City. International Labor Defense.

## Convict Labor in Russia

SIR: Opponents of Soviet Russia are blue in the face with indignation at American purchase of commodities produced by Russian convict labor. They have raised a storm against that terrible atrocity, Soviet convict labor, placing themselves, of course, on the side of the angels. Also, according to the howl of the enemies of Soviet Russia and, it seems, even according to the views of very tolerant critics of that land, convict labor is an evil *per se*. Let us see what this atrocity really is and we shall find out the true meaning of the moral wrath of the opposition.

Mr. Winthrop D. Lane in the August issue of The Survey Graphic enumerates the following conditions existing in the American prisons, which have caused the prison revolts in the past and will cause them in the future:

1. Long sentences due to our hysterical desire to curb crime by severe punishment.
2. Elimination or reduction of "good conduct" time by which prisoners earn a shortening of their sentences.
3. Fewer paroles and those granted only after a longer term in prison.
4. Excessive overcrowding, with this condition getting worse from month to month.
5. Unpardonable idleness. Men are locked up for years with nothing to do.

From the above notes we deduce two fundamental principles:

1. Prisoners should be employed in profitable labor.
2. Labor conditions in prisons should be on a par with labor conditions existing generally.

In other words scientific penology teaches that convict labor is a necessity and the absence of it an evil and that convict labor and free labor should not be differentiated for purposes of

discrimination against the former. These two progressive ideas are recognized and practised by the Soviet Union, as is shown in an article in the New York Telegram, July 30, 1930, written by Frederick Kuh, a United Press Correspondent. The following is an extract from that article:

> . . . economic and social conditions [in the Soviet prisons] usually were exemplary. The law, which was rigidly enforced, provides an eight-hour day for convict labor. Overtime and night work were prohibited and the convicts were allowed forty-two hours of complete leisure weekly. They received from 30 to 50-percent payment in comparison to trade-union wages, which range from 90 to 250 rubles per month.
>
> The law stipulates that convicts whose behavior is good shall be credited with three days' sentence for every two days' labor; thus, many six-month terms end after four months. The rule applied even to convicts classified as apprentice labor. No convict was forced to work without pay anywhere in the Soviet Union, and if he is underpaid a convict may sue the government. Female convicts who are expectant mothers receive full pay without work for weeks before and after confinement. Virtually all convicts receive two weeks' complete holiday each years, during which time they may leave the prison.. . . Men and women convicts respectively are allowed to spend week-ends with their husbands and wives in special cells belonging to the prison.. . .

We see then from the above description that the atrocious prison conditions found in the United States are not to be found in Soviet Russia. Prisons and prison labor in Soviet Russia should be an example to be followed by the United States.

New York City. MARTIN WOLFSON.

## Humanism in the Cincinnati Clearing House

SIR: I am surprised by your editorial comment, in your issue of July 23, on the recent closing of the Cosmopolitan Bank and of the Brotherhood Bank in Cincinnati. I have no special knowledge of these events not obtainable by any other resident of Cincinnati from the local newspapers. But that, as it happens, is apparently sufficient to discredit your statement of the facts, on which you base your comment.

For when the Cosmopolitan Bank was closed, it became generally known at the same time that the Brotherhood Bank was also involved in the extraordinary financial transactions of Mr. Amor W. Shafer. There also occurred a sudden change in the officers of the Brotherhood Bank, but no public statement was made as to the bank's real situation. Widespread uneasiness developed, and during the following week there were constant heavy withdrawals from the Brotherhood Bank, which finally, in a last effort to keep its doors open, appealed for aid to the Clearing House Association. The appeal was denied. Perhaps this was a mistake, but the grounds of the denial at the time commended themselves to the public, and helped to restore general confidence in the financial institutions of the city. The Association's decision was based on the simple fact that, while the Brotherhood National Bank was known to be involved in the Shafer case, the extent of its liabilities and of the improper transactions sanctioned by its officers was not known, and could not be accurately ascertained until the completion of the federal investigation which was then under way. Immediately thereafter the United States District Attorney caused the arrest of one former and one present officer of the Brotherhood Bank, the Comptroller of the Currency took charge of the bank, and it closed its doors.

It was not until this event that runs on certain other banks of the city took place, developing to such proportions in a single day that a general panic seemed imminent. And it was not until the close of this day of panic that the Clearing House Association took action, issuing a statement to the effect that no banks of the city or county, save the two before mentioned had been involved in the slightest extent in the Shafer case, that the Association was satisfied as to the solvency of all other banks, and that it was prepared to assist them to weather the crisis. At the same time it was made known that the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, through its Cincinnati branch, was placing a very large amount of currency at the disposal of the banks which had been threatened with embarrassment by the runs of that day. This was sufficient to save the situation. On the following day quiet was restored, and many frightened depositors began to bring back the money they had withdrawn from their banks the day before.

This statement of the facts is easily verifiable, but it cannot be reconciled with yours. If there is any adequate explanation of your statement, it should be given to your readers. Otherwise you can scarcely complain if the impression is formed that your statement was a deliberate falsification, unscrupulously published with the intention of stirring up class hatred.

North River, N. Y. ROBERT SHAFER.

[Mr. Shafer's account of the closing of the Brotherhood National Bank in Cincinnati omits important facts in the case and distorts some of the others.

The New Republic's information is that the claims against the bank on account of Amor Shafer's transactions amounted, not to an unascertainable sum, but to a definite maximum of $517,000. These contingent claims, some of which may not be valid, were fully covered by more than $600,000 worth of bonds, insurance and personal property. Thus, had the Clearing House helped the Brotherhood Bank, it would have incurred no risk on this score.

In the second place, Mr. Shafer fails to mention a most important feature of the whole case—that the Brotherhood Bank was perfectly solvent, and that this fact was emphasized by the United States Comptroller of the Currency, who dissolved the temporary receivership and restored the bank to its board of directors six days after it was closed.

In the third place, Mr. Shafer misrepresents the public reaction in Cincinnati to the closing of the Brotherhood Bank. He does not mention the fact—reported in the newspapers—that an important minority in the Clearing House Association was in favor of extending help to the bank. He does not admit what is obvious to anyone who reads his letter—that far from helping to "restore confidence in the financial institutions of the city," the final refusal of the Clearing House, by causing the closing of the bank, contributed directly to a general unsettlement of the banking situation. The following day, there were runs on four or five of the largest Cincinnati banks; but these were not labor institutions and they received prompt help from the Clearing House. It is interesting to note that an editorial appeared in The Cincinnati Times-Star which went farther than The New Republic's editorial in condemnation of the Clearing House.

It is also interesting to note that there is a Robert Shafer who lives in Cincinnati, who is widely known as the second lieutenant of the Humanist movement, and is the author of frequent magazine articles in which everyone opposed to the doctrines of More and Babbitt is accused of being "impudent." Are this gentleman and our correspondent by any chance one and the same person? If they are, is this not a striking instance of an alliance between Humanism and the more reactionary bankers—between anti-unionism and the Inner Check?—THE EDITORS.]

## From a Grim Realist

SIR: I am forcing my hand to this probably quite futile protest against the mood of impersonal unreality in the affairs of a diminished world that results from Mr. Edmund Wilson's "Beautiful Old Things," in The New Republic of July 20.

To find myself continuing to read down the page through "Washington Notes" in the mood of un-involvement created by Mr. Wilson, is disturbing.

The New Republic has had a kind of vitality that was precious for its own sake. Whether one agreed or not, your pages vitalized toward an opinion. Four of your pages given to Mr. Wilson's disembodied banter leave one languid as to the fate of mankind—the allotted span in a world that's nobody's business is three score and ten!

San Francisco, Calif. ROBERT C. PORTER.

# A Strange Story

*The Strange Death of President Harding, by Gaston B. Means. New York: Guild Publishing Corporation. 342 pages. $3.50.*

AFTER a life of various adventures as a detective, in the course of which he served the German government in the early years of the War and was later investigator for the Department of Justice under William J. Burns, an employment which led to his conviction and imprisonment at Atlanta, Mr. Gaston B. Means has entered literature to tell us "sad stories of the death of kings." It is a sad story and a deeply interesting one to the American people. A man of feeble character and intelligence, vaguely conscious of his deficiencies, elevated in his own despite to the chief office in the state by representatives of special interests because they knew that they could "shuffle and deal him as a pack of cards," President Harding marked the lowest point in the degradation of the American presidency. Add to this the intervention of a wife whose ambition was only equaled by her jealousy, who realized that her husband and President was in the power of another woman and of corrupt men and who fought the battle on both fronts, and we have a situation in which Browning or Meredith would have found a subject made to his hand.

Mr. Means tells a plain, if not entirely unvarnished, tale, which coincides in the main with what is known from other sources, such as Nan Britton's story of "The President's Daughter." As an investigator for the Department of Justice he occupied a house on Sixteenth Street, Washington, in the yard of which was a hole twenty feet deep in which the loot of bribery—sometimes as much as $500,000—was deposited until it could be safely banked. One way in which this plunder was collected is graphically described. Through tipsters, the Department was informed as to the amount of liquor of which various dealers in New York were disposing, and these gentlemen were summoned to a room in the Hotel Vanderbilt to deposit their protection money in a glass bowl. Means, watching through a peephole in the next room, was thus able to verify the person and amount. Fully $7,000,000 passed through his hands in this way and the same system was followed in Chicago, St. Louis, Detroit and elsewhere. "Mr. Daugherty was never a piker! He wanted to know the bootleggers who were capable of handling large quantities of whisky—that is: in 5,000-barrel lots." In the Alien Property Custodian's office, directed by Colonel Miller, claimants would be told to apply for quick action to a certain Thurston, whose fee of forty or fifty thousand would be split with Miller. Mr. Means lists some fourteen sources of major graft in the Department of Justice, all of which was paid to Jesse Smith, who was Mr. Daugherty's confidential man and lived in the same apartment. Means received a modest salary from the government of $89.33 weekly, but all the expenses of his household were paid, including a $5,000 car, and he cut in on collections.

All this, however, is mere circumstantial detail, interesting no doubt to the American people, but subsidiary to the main plot. That concerns Mrs. Harding. This lady was in consultation with a clairvoyant, whose identity may be easily guessed, who had assured her that she was a Child of Destiny, marked by the stars for greater things than are implied in being a Chief Magistrate's consort, with the empty title of First Lady in the Land. She lusted for power through control of the President, which she realized had passed into the hands of Daugherty, and she feared for the honor of her husband, which was menaced by the infamous uses to which his administration was degraded. She employed Means as her private detective, with the consent of his superior, William J. Burns. She realized that Mr. Harding's modest fortune had been lost in the stock market through tips given by Daugherty, and she was anxious to learn if the latter had acted on the same advice, and suffered corresponding losses. She suspected also that the ring controlled the President through knowledge of his private life. Both these matters Means investigated for her, obtaining proof of Harding's love of Nan Britton. His story checks up in most details with that told by Miss Britton herself, and it is psychologically convincing. The Hardings' marriage had been childless; Nan Britton had a child. Mortal jealousy mingled with Mrs. Harding's sense of defeat, with her fear. "His friends? Crooks—thieves—liars! All of them laughing at me—knowing all the time about his child, and using that knowledge as a whip to force him to sign any papers they put before him, so they can steal and pillage the nation. Laughing at me—so smart they are. Fool!"

The explosion came with the death of Jesse Smith, who was recognized as the weak member of the plunderbund. Smith had kept an exact record of his transactions and intended to place this in Mrs. Harding's hands. According to another well authenticated account, the President sent for Smith and held a long conference with him, lasting until midnight, at the White House. The next morning about four, Means was summoned to the apartment which Smith and Daugherty inhabited together. He was met by one of his "superior officers," who told him that Smith had committed suicide and directed him to search the body and bring away all papers. Means's own opinion of the affair is clearly indicated. "Jess Smith—a suicide? Never on God's green earth."

Thence the story rushes to its conclusion. The President with Mrs. Harding made his trip to Alaska, on which Daugherty did not accompany him. He died on his return at San Francisco. Means gives the account in Mrs. Harding's words, which reveal the same mixture of motives that gives astonishing verisimilitude to the whole narrative:

> "As you know, everything was closing in. As his secretary—I learned of dangers of which I had not dreamed. From all directions—they came.
>
> "And then one day, he was writing a letter. I casually asked him—to whom he was writing. He replied that he was writing to his old father—in Marion. He lied. That letter was to Nan Britton. I intercepted it. . . . No—I have no regrets.
>
> "I was alone with the President . . . and . . . only about ten minutes. It was time for his medicine. . . . I gave it to him . . . he drank it. He lay back on the pillows a moment. His eyes were closed. . . . He was resting. . . . Then—suddenly—he opened his eyes wide . . . and moved his head and looked straight into my face. I was standing by his bedside."
>
> As she paused I could not refrain the question:
>
> "You think—he knew?"
>
> "Yes, I think he knew. Then—he sighed and turned his head away—over—on the pillow. . . . After a few minutes—I called for help. The papers told the rest."

It will be remembered that the accounts given in the press varied. It was first stated that the nurses were in the room when the President died. Later it was asserted that except for Mrs. Harding only General Sawyer was

present, or "just outside the doorway." Mrs. Harding refused to have a death mask made, and Means takes credit to himself for guarding the body on its return to Washington to prevent an autopsy.

Mr. Means rationalizes the judgment passed on Jesse Smith. If his papers had not been intercepted—"Why—the government would have fallen—blown up! There would have been almost no government left! . . . The government must be saved. It was logical! It was a patriotic duty. Hadn't every government on earth since the days of Acan in the camp put to death its traitors? . . . What is one life—in the balance of universal benefit to our millions of citizens? The government had to be saved." This may be irony, but it is easy to imagine that other members of Harding's administration, who must have known in general of the situation, argued in the same way. This reasoning accounts for Coolidge's reluctance to dismiss Daugherty, and the general slackness of his housecleaning, not to mention scandalous efforts to cover up the dirt. It probably figured, along with other considerations, in the mind of the single juryman who stood out against the conviction of Daugherty, when he was indicted along with Colonel Miller for conspiracy in the American Metals case. Mrs. Harding's justification is less elaborate, but equally animated by political loyalty: "I have not betrayed my country or the party that my husband loved so much. They are saved—I have no regrets—*I have fulfilled my destiny.*" The combination of Mme. Blavatsky and Lady Macbeth is reinforced by a touch of Charlotte Corday.

Mrs. Mary Dixon Thacker, who is responsible for the form in which Means's story is given to the public, evidently shares his philosophy. She asserts in her preface: "This story is in no way a reflection on the American political system. On the contrary, it is a vindication of this system. It clearly reveals how a Great Party was tricked and how it extricated itself with a dignity and poise and sureness of purpose unexcelled in history." These virtues may be attributed to Mrs. Harding, but scarcely to the Great Party. As to the vindication of our political system, it is enough to note that one member of President Harding's cabinet is President; another is Chief Justice of the Supreme Court; another still Secretary of the Treasury; while Daugherty and Fall go unpunished. At least the Great Party has preserved its integrity.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

# Intellectual Comedy

*Confessions of Zeno, by Italo Svevo. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $3.*

SINCE his death in 1928, Italo Svevo has become one of the most alive and robust of our contemporary literary legends. He is a very nearly perfect example of the amateur in literature, a rare find these days—the successful business man turned novelist. His discovery by James Joyce and the subsequent rapid growth of his reputation have given his name a peculiarly exotic flavor, perticularly in this country, where the progression from business to literature is usually reversed. The first of his novels to be translated into English, "The Hoax," did little more than establish this Austro-Italian business man as having a faint resemblance to the superficial aspects of Arthur Schnitzler and Luigi Pirandello. We were assured, however, that he had something more to offer; and since the translation of "The Confessions of Zeno" there can be little doubt that Joyce's early enthusiasm for his protegé was largely based upon brilliant literary judgment.

Zeno, himself a perfect amateur in the business of living, can be recognized as a minor, modern substitute for the figure of Don Quixote, set at liberty within a miniature world of introspection. He is presented to us in a form that is not so much a novel as a series of novelettes, more or less complete in themselves and of uneven quality. Three of the six rather long short stories that constitute his confessional—those under the chapter headings, "The Last Cigarette," "The Death of My Father" and "A Business Partnership"—are entirely successful, the others far less so; for the task of keeping Zeno within the bounds of a literary medium is a difficult one, and Svevo is not always equal to the task. The fact remains, however, that Zeno, conscious, alive, helpless in the face of circumstances, the inevitable product of the modern leisure class, is an important person. Nor is he confined to his immediate environment, the gay, pretty little city of Trieste, nor to the European continent. If we laugh at him, we do so with the disquieting and horrible realization that gentlemen of Zeno's complexion are strolling down Park Avenue daily and that his blood flows through our veins.

Examine "The Last Cigarette," the first of his confessions. It is properly introduced by a statement from Dr. S——, Zeno's psychiatrist, who has taken the responsibility of publishing these memoirs as a means of revenge against an escaped patient. From then on we are given Zeno's remarkable duel with the cigarette habit. The affair reaches a climax when the hero has himself shipped to a sanitarium in an effort to annihilate the vice that is gnawing at his vitals, only to break jail for the sake of enjoying again the ineffable delight of his last cigarette. Here is comedy of a very high order, in which the machinery of the plot is adroitly disguised.

"The Last Cigarette" is followed by Zeno's account of his father's death, a network involving all the subtle and uneasy relationships existing between father and son. The episode is neatly balanced between horror and comedy, for Zeno is entirely capable of believing that he is really a parricide. With characteristic lack of decision, he wavers between self-justification and a desire to shoulder full blame for the spasm of rage that brought an end to his father's last illness. The story of Zeno's marriage, his proposal to three sisters in one evening, and how he is tricked into capturing the least desirable of the three, is less fortunate. Here the situation becomes forced; long before we are told, we realize exactly what is going to happen.

It is not until we find Zeno in a business partnership with his brother-in-law, an amateur musician, that Svevo's inimitable talents are once more revealed. Zeno's solemn worship of the mystery that surrounds "big business" is excellent criticism of the whole of our contemporary social machinery. The parody is double-edged, for it is directed against the sensitive or "artistic soul," drifting through a pragmatic world, as well as against the modern superrefinements of business technique. Zeno, a silent partner without a salary, is again the innocent, self-appointed instrument of ruin and death.

Zeno's actual value for us lies in the fact that Svevo never reduces him to a mere pathological case. He is never quite the fool that he sometimes appears to be. He is a shrewd weapon against the facile claims of psychoanalysis. It is to his advantage, however, that he proves nothing at all and that he exists, complete and unadorned, at the volition of his creator.

HORACE GREGORY.

# American Wages

*Real Wages in the United States, 1890-1926, by Paul H. Douglas. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 682 pages. $7.50.*

THE PUBLICATION in 1929 of Paul F. Brissenden's census monograph on the "Earnings of Factory Workers, 1899 to 1927" and the issue a year later of Douglas' study of real wages make available to American students of labor the most comprehensive body of materials on wages, cost of living and unemployment that has yet appeared in any country. Both studies involve not only the orderly collection and interpretation of a huge mass of scattered and often incomparable data, but also the choice of one of several possible methods of procedure and analysis. The Douglas study, also, does not limit itself to the real earnings of factory workers, but covers in addition transportation, mining and construction, clerical workers and public employees, and such professional groups as ministers and teachers, representing altogether some 27,000,000 wage and salaried workers.

Most modern studies of wages are concerned with two basic problems—the discovery of actual annual earnings and the correction of money earnings for changes in the purchasing power of the dollar, or, as it is commonly described, the conversion of money into real earnings. Solution of the first problem rests largely on proper estimates of the annual volume of all types of unemployment, and of the second, on the discovery of an adequate series of retail prices covering the commodities and services bought by the families of various classes of workingmen. This book of Professor Douglas, then, includes all sorts of money wages, new measurements of the cost of living and of unemployment, derived data of annual earnings, and, in addition, a discussion of the relation between earnings and the productivity of labor. It should be clear from this summary statement of the content of the book that a scientific estimate of the work would require close familiarity with the original data and time and money enough to repeat large parts of the job; or, in other words, the opportunity to apply to a great mass of statistical data of this sort the same methods of independent check that characterize attempts to establish the validity of scientific findings issuing from the laboratory. Lacking such resources, it is possible only, in brief compass, to indicate important conclusions and to lay before the reader a few of the problems encountered in reaching them.

All of the methods used by Professor Douglas lead to the conclusion that the real annual earnings of American workers were much higher in 1926 than in the decade 1890-1899. The extent of the improvement differs substantially among the various groups and changes with the method of comparison. If conditions in the single year 1926 are compared with the average conditions in the period 1890-1899, it is found that the real annual earnings of employed factory workers had risen by 29 percent; of transportation workers, by 21 percent; of bituminous-coal miners, by 52 percent; of clerical and salaried workers in manufacturing and railroading, by 3 percent; and of teachers, by 86 percent. The real annual earnings of government employees and ministers were, on the other hand, below the level of the nineties. Comparisons between 1926 and 1914 appear to show that the gains were for the most part made during the post-war years.

The year 1926, however, was an exceptionally good one in the history of American business, and high real earnings in such a year are obviously not sufficient proof of consistent improvement in the material status of labor. To obtain a longer view of the situation, by taking into account the effects on earnings of both good and bad business years, Professor Douglas compares real earnings in each of the twenty-seven years from 1900 to 1926 with the average annual earnings in the decade 1890-1899, and from this comparison derives the average gain or loss in real earnings during the later period. Expressed as percentages of average earnings from 1890 to 1899, the gains or losses of the various groups of workers in 1926 were as follows:

> Gains: teachers, 37 percent; bituminous-coal miners, 33 percent; farm labor, 11 percent; manufacturing workers, 7 percent; steam-railway workers, 5 percent; street-railway workers, 3 percent; telephone employees, 1 percent.
>
> Neither gain nor loss: telegraph employees.
>
> Losses: clerical workers, 4 percent; postal employees, 13 percent; ministers, 15 percent; gas and electrical workers, 20 percent; federal employees in Washington, D. C., 24 percent.

A final comparison between 1926 and the nineties includes gains from sources other than the rise in money wages and changes in the cost of living. Since 1890 Professor Douglas has found a decrease of 5 percent in the number of dependents per gainfully employed worker; the increase in free income from the government and from private philanthropy and employers he estimates to be between 5 and 6 percent; and he finds an increase in real earnings from 7 to 8 percent due to a lower rate of unemployment. Adding these gains to the gain of 35 percent in the purchasing power of wages, the author concludes that "in 1926 the workers enjoyed an income which was approximately 55 percent higher than during the nineties."

Passing over a multitude of questions of theory and practice which comparisons of this nature inevitably raise, it is important to comment, if only briefly, on the three basic elements involved in measuring the course of real annual earnings. While some success might be achieved in measuring the levels of money wages, cost of living and unemployment at any single instant, the difficulties of measurement are multiplied many times in the attempt to compare the levels of these items, separately or combined, over long periods of time. In the thirty-seven years from 1890 to 1926 there have been profound and inscrutable changes in our statistics of money wages. Many wage series available since 1920 are immeasurably superior to earlier series, both in size of sample and in the quality of the raw data. The more remote the comparisons, therefore, the greater are the possible sources of error.

The problems inherent in the construction of an index of the cost of living, sensitive to radical changes in the quality of living, have long been the subject of discussion. Since 1890, and even since 1910, there have been such profound revolutions in the constitution of the budgets of American families that it is doubtful whether a continuous index number of the cost of living can reflect the actual variations in the purchasing power of a workingman's dollar.

Current discussion on the prevailing volume of unemployment in this country is sufficient commentary on the inadequacy of available measures of unemployment. In his investigation of this subject, Professor Douglas finds that "the decade of the nineties appears to have been characterized by a higher percentage of unemployment than most of the subsequent years, the average for manufacturing and transportation being 10.4 percent, as compared with an

average of 6.4 percent for the subsequent twenty-eight years of 1900-1927." The reviewer is not familiar with the estimates of unemployment before 1920, but he took part in the preparation of the estimates from 1920 to 1927. From his experience with these data, he would regard the final estimates as subject to so wide and variable a margin of error as to make the final data nearly worthless for the task in hand.

It is only fair to say that these observations are no reflection on Professor Douglas' book. With inadequate and puzzling raw materials he has painted the most complete picture of the course of American wages we have yet had; and by his courage and ingenuity he has made a contribution to American economic history that should place all students deeply in his debt. LEO WOLMAN.

# An English Baudelaire

*Baudelaire, Flesh and Spirit, by Lewis Piaget Shanks. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 265 pages. $3.50.*

BAUDELAIRE made himself one marvelous legend in his lifetime; his biographers have subsequently been inspired to make many bad legends. Huneker's legend is perhaps the most entertaining, Symons' the most seductively foreign, Porché's the soundest, and Mr. Shanks's the most of a libelous melange. We have here presented to us a poet *maudit*, a Flower of Evil, whose life was barren of tenderness, except his mother's; a sensitive and sentimental poet who lived and died a failure. So Mr. Shanks's preface. The completed volume gives us the vague figure of a romantic idiot with a genius for evocative language. That is the only impression which Mr. Shanks succeeds in conveying of the passionate intelligence, the disciplined intellect of Baudelaire.

We are supposed by Mr. Shanks to have nibbled surreptitiously at "Les Fleurs du Mal" in our salad days, and in our innocence to have pictured the poet "as a romantic Ajax defying morals and convention in verses unexceptionally saturnine and orgiastic." Mr. Shanks is mistaken; it is he who is the romantic; and it is himself he should go about rescuing. The young men about whom he is concerned are much more likely to have consulted Du Bos and Porché and the poems themselves, than they are to need his services.

The trouble lies in Mr. Shanks's principles of literary biography. He believes that "a poet's life is his works, far more than the adventures of his body. A poet's life is the moods that enchain him." He appears to believe these two statements indiscriminately, and at the same time, without recognizing the contradiction between them. It is evidently upon this assumption that he pursues the poet's life into his poems—a procedure which has the effect of making it impossible for him to understand either. What is worse, he forces the poems into the life. Whole poems, in translation, are used as if they formed integral paragraphs in his narrative. It is difficult, in reading an interpretation of this kind, to resist the conviction that, if what the biographer says is true, the poems must be rubbish and the poet an ass.

Take this as an example. Mr. Shanks translates "Madrigal Triste" in part, and adds: "Baudelaire's present hell, a hell of creditors and notes due before the clock announced the closing of the bank, and his terror of bailiffs and process-servers knocking at his door, have given him the sadistic pride of Maturin's Melmoth. But they have made him ask more from love than mere physical contact." It should be understood that, though Mr. Shanks makes this statement in direct conjunction with the poem, he in no way gives any explicit evidence of the connection between them. In other words, we have a guess, a surmise, an interpretation; we have the poet's life in his poems and the poems in the moods which enchained him. So almost every poem is made to illustrate some private episode, some private feeling in the poet's life. Mr. Shanks is even able to extract this secret from the poems, though he neglects to say where. "Walking gave him a Byronic mastery over pain."

This sort of thing is not particularly Mr. Shanks's fault, nor does his biography suffer from it more than most. It is the fault of the bastard *genre* in which he writes—biographies of men whose lives were in their works and whose works we have before us. Biographers seldom realize the difference between writing about a politician like Disraeli, whose work and important life can only live in the biographies and histories written about him, and writing about a poet like Baudelaire, of whom little is known at best, where the biographer can do little but dilute, and perhaps misinterpret, the work we already possess. Every success in this field, and I suppose there are some, is a *tour de force*—in which the author succeeds in putting together something he did not set out to—a collection of anecdotes, a piece of history, or, most rarely, a good essay in criticism. Otherwise, he has written a bad novel or created a mischievous legend. In either case he has performed a disservice to his subject, since his accomplishment is a bar to direct contact with the poet's works.

The fact is that Baudelaire hardly left behind him enough to write about. But, as Mr. Shanks says, "a poet's life is his works." Had he understood his own axiom more clearly, he would have served us better. He would have limited himself to translation and annotation, with a supplementary record of facts. He would have explained, and in Baudelaire there is plenty to explain, difficulties of image and sense. Diaries, letters and anecdotes could have been drawn on for notes and glosses. In short, he would have examined "the poet's life in his works" and made an honest piece of criticism. R. P. BLACKMUR.

## Contributors

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY is the author of "Renascence," "The Buck in the Snow" and other volumes of verse.

J. B. S. HARDMAN is editor of The Advance, the weekly organ of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers.

KIRKE MECHEM is the author of "Who Won the War?" and other plays. He now lives in Wichita, Kansas.

JOHN HODGDON BRADLEY, JR., is the author of "Parade of the Living," which Coward McCann is publishing this autumn. His contribution in this issue is to be included in his book.

ALLEN TATE is now at work on a book of essays which will appear next spring.

LEWIS MUMFORD, known to New Republic readers as critic of architecture, art and civilization, was acting editor of The Sociological Review in 1920 under Mr. Victor Branford.

MORRIS L. COOKE, consulting engineer and lecturer on scientific management and municipal administration, is the author of "Public Utility Regulation."

HAROLD G. MOULTON, director of the Institute of Economics at Washington, has contributed to various scientific journals and has lectured on economic subjects.

HORACE GREGORY is the author of "Chelsea Rooming House," a book of verse to be published this fall.

LEO WOLMAN is head of the research department of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and a member of the staff of the National Bureau of Economic Research.

R. P. BLACKMUR was formerly an editor of The Hound and Horn.

INTERNATIONAL HOTEL

## HITHERWOOD

An International Hostel and Guest House

London

For Students and Holiday Visitors from Overseas.

*Terms and particulars from*

THE HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP,
Highfield, Golders Green Road,
London, N. W. 11.

SUMMER PLACES

**SUNCLAD ACRE**, gentlewoman's early American home in foothills of Berkshires, now offers its modern comforts and excellent cuisine to not more than eight guests who desire complete rest. Splendid views, thorough quiet, fishing, tennis, swimming close by. Twenty-five a week. References exchanged. Alice Bennett, Sunclad Acre, Brookfield Center, Connecticut.

**"AUTUMN ON CAPE COD"**
September and October are delightful months in Provincetown. Bright blue days. Swimming one block from bay. Charming rooms. Good food. Fall rates, $25 weekly. Ann Washington Craton, 22 Pearl Street, Provincetown, Mass.

**SPEND GLORIOUS AUTUMN** days in the famous Shenandoah Valley. Modernized colonial estate. Off tourist route. Rates, $12 to $15 per week. Major Marshall MacDonald, Media Farm, Charles Town, West Virginia.

**Riverside Inn, Derby, Conn.**, on Housatonic River, surrounded by hills and woods; swimming, boating, basket ball, tennis. Modern Improvements. Vegetarians accommodated. 70 miles from New York. Rates, $23 per week. Telephone Derby 231-2. P. O. Seymour, Conn.

Country board in Maine. Women only. Lake, pine woods, cabins, all sports. $25 weekly. Address: Box 505, The New Republic.

HIKING TOURS

**DYRUS** and **EDITH COOK** are now conducting hiking tours over the old trails of the Catskill Mountains. Five-day trips. Two donkey pack-train. All camping equipment provided. If your vacation period coincides with our yet unfilled dates we can make you reduced rates. Box 353, Woodstock, N. Y.

POSITIONS WANTED

**VERSATILE AND ADAPTABLE** young woman, unusual experience in literary and artistic work, both editorial and secretarial, would like position with individual or firm where experience would be of value. Shorthand; proof-corrections; make-up; ability to write and draw. Adequate salary. Address: Box 516, The New Republic.

**YOUNG MAN**, University Graduate, well-rounded education, two years research-editorial for noted publisher, contributor two encyclopaedias, desires immediate connection anything but selling. Highest references. Salary secondary. Address: Box 511, The New Republic.

**Young Jewish Girl**, university graduate, amiable personality, sincere in her work, desires a position next September in a public or private secondary school or as private tutor, in piano, music appreciation, English, Latin or German. Best references as to character and education furnished upon request. Address Box 508, The New Republic.

**A Gentlewoman**, versatile, capable, former teacher, seeks a post in a school as chaperone or housemother. Will take classes in English or history. Salary secondary. Address: Box 510, The New Republic.

SCHOOLS

**THE PHILIPS TUTORING SCHOOL** for boys affords individual instruction by experienced tutors for college preparation or for advanced standing in preparatory schools. Makes up deficiencies due to illness or travel. A very limited number received in ideal home conditions. An ideal home for convalescent boy unable to do full time work. No cases of mental disability received.
Jesse Evans Philips, A.M.,
West Chester, Pa.

**PLAYWRITING AT N.U.**

Classes in playwriting, playshop production for promising manuscripts, walking rehearsals, etc. Competitive scholarships available. For catalog write:

THE DEAN
*School of Speech and Theatre Arts*
Evanston, Ill.

CAPITAL WANTED

**GENTLEMAN FOND OF MOTORING** and boating desires salaried position with intelligent and congenial party who will finance all expenses of building and selling a sixteen to twenty foot motor boat to sell for less than $300 with cabin, plus motor. My design of boat, etc., has novel features and is practically unsinkable. Crowded condition of highways insures a fortune for one possessing vision and money to finance a motor boat to sell at a reasonable price to the masses. Others get thousands for a motor boat that can be sold for about $300. Address: Vision, Box 515, The New Republic.

FOR SALE

**HOUSE IN SUNNYSIDE GARDENS**
One-family, brick, 6 rooms and finished attic with two porches. In a restricted residential community, with private park and recreations. 20 min. from Times square. Near Interborough, BMT and 2nd Avenue "L" station. Price, $10,500. Mortgage, $7,500. Small cash payment, balance easy terms. Phone Stillwell 5551.

**IN ADIRONDACK MOUNTAINS**—160 acres—5 room log cabin—peeled spruce—built 1865. Perfect condition. Wonderful summer home or hunting camp; cellar, garage. $3,800.00; easy terms. 100 other camps and cabins. Booklet. Earl Woodward, Luzerne, N. Y.

FOR RENT

**FOR RENT FURNISHED**
Large modern country house, beginning September 1st, between New City and Haverstraw, New York. 13 rooms, 3 baths, 4 open fireplaces, steamheat, 25 acres of garden and woodland with playground. Tennis Court. Telephone: New City 16-W.

**Greenwich Village:** Charming 3-room apartments, artistic and different. Roof garden overlooking Hudson River. Very convenient to 9th Avenue L and Hudson Tube. $75. Apply Superintendent, 3 Weehawken Street (one block from Hudson River, between Christopher and 10th Streets).

LANGUAGES

## FRENCH, SPANISH,

ITALIAN, GERMAN

Conversational method, Carefully selected Native teachers. Private lessons, 75c ,short course, 9 to 9 daily, 18th year.

**FISHER'S SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES**
1264 Lexington Avenue, N. W. Cor. 85th St.

**FRENCH - SPANISH - ITALIAN**

GERMAN. Private lessons 75c Daily 9-9). Native teachers. Interesting conversational method. 19th year. Also neglected English education.

**UNIVERSAL SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES**
1265 Lexington Ave., Northeast cor 85th St.

BOOKS

**THE BOOKS YOU CAN'T GET ELSEWHERE**

may be rented for a nominal fee. Members throughout the United States have access to a large collection of rare, scarce, out-of-print, strange and curious books; limited, privately-printed editions, unabridged translations and extraordinary new books. Please state occupation or profession when writing for information and lists.

**Esoterika Biblion Society**
45 West 45th Street, Dep't C-3 New York City

*The books of*

## JOHN JAY CHAPMAN

For further particulars write to

A. S. LUSENBERG
156 Fifth Avenue New York City

*Old and rare books*

**FIVE - LANGUAGES - IN - ONE**

French-Spanish-German-Italian-English. Containing 5,000 practical words attractively arranged. Limited supply. $1.50. Order today. Universal Institute, 1265 Lexington Ave., (D12) New York.

GRAPHOLOGIST

Do you take a business inventory and forget a personal one? Test yourself graphologically. An illuminating method. Send handwriting. Analysis, $1.00. Miss Florence Lyon, Box 286, Quincy, Mass.

GENERAL

**REAL HARRIS TWEED**
The aristocrats of all sports wear—direct from makers. Sample free. Suit-lengths by Mail. Carriage Paid.
NEWALL, 159 Stornoway, Scotland.

## NOW IS THE TIME

If you want a more than average job, or a more than average person to fill one—

If you want to rent an apartment, or let one to a responsible person—

If you have any unusual want that an unusual audience may be expected to satisfy—

*Advertise in*

## The NEW REPUBLIC

# Communism in America

## A Note on Next Week's Article

In the second article of his series Mr. Hardman will review the history of Communist activities in American trade unions. In 1919, the stage was set for the triumphal entry of Communist leaders into the labor movement. What was the Communist procedure? Why and when was it reversed—and what happened then? What are the Communist tactics at present, and what results are they bearing? What is the status and strength of the Communist labor organizations—the National Textile Workers' Union, the National Mine Workers' Union, the Independent Shoe Workers' Union? Can the present situation be described as: "the Communist Party versus the labor movement?"

## A Note on the Author

J. B. Salutsky Hardman was born in Grodno, Russia, in 1882. He came to the United States in 1909. He had attended school until he was fifteen; from the ages of sixteen to eighteen he workd as clerk and then as business manager of a lumber mill and construction company. At nineteen he joined the Social Democracy and became active in the revolutionary movement. For a time he studied law at the Petrograd University; following that, he spent fifteen months in prisons in Vilna, Kalish, Lublin, Kiev. Continuing to take part in the trade union movement after 1905 and until 1908, he was exiled from Russia by Order-in-Council. In America he has been a graduate student at Columbia University, editor, from 1913 to 1920, of the Naye Welt, Yiddish Labor Weekly; on the staff of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America as Educational Director from 1920 to 1924; editor of The Advance since 1925. He was editor of The American Labor Monthly, 1923-24 and of American Labor Dynamics, 1928.

*Subscribe for the remainder of the series*

13 weeks for $1

THE NEW REPUBLIC,
421 West 21st Street,
New York, N. Y.

For the enclosed ONE DOLLAR BILL send me The New Republic for the next 13 weeks.

Name .....City .....

Street .....State .....

8-27-30

Printed by Steinberg Press, Inc., 489 Pearl St., New York, N. Y.

*Just Published*
*in the Dollar Series*

# INVESTMENT TRUSTS Gone Wrong!

by JOHN T. FLYNN

**This book exposes the abuses characterizing the American exploitation of a new engine of capital control. ¶ It reveals the extent to which industrial ownership is passing into the hands of gigantic holding companies. ¶ Individual trusts are analyzed for the prospective investor.**

---

THE NEW REPUBLIC, 421 WEST 21st STREET, NEW YORK CITY.

For the attached ONE DOLLAR BILL send me post paid *Investment Trusts Gone Wrong!*

NAME ..... STREET .....

CITY ..... STATE .....

8-27-30.